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# Editorial

## THE INESCAPABLENESS OF THEOLOGY

WE are told on good authority that religious interest on this continent has reached an all time high. In the United States 60 percent of the population, or in all, 95 million persons, are members of some religious institution. Hundreds of millions of dollars are being spent each year on new churches and on the enlargement of older churches. More people are going to church than ever before. How curious it is then that journals of theology should have such a struggle to live and that theological books which offer a serious discussion of important aspects of the Christian faith should have such a meagre circulation! One hundred million church members on this continent, more than a half million Christians engaged in special ministries, and yet no journal of theology has more than 5000 subscribers and few even of the most readable theological books reach a circulation of more than 10,000! It is apparent that, even for a large portion of the clergy, interest in the Christian religion and in the church does not extend to an interest in theology.

This is both curious and significant because no Christian—and least of all a clergyman—can escape being a theologian. He may be a confused theologian. He may be an unconscious and irresponsible theologian. He may be an uninformed and naive theologian. But he cannot be a Christian and not have a theology of some kind.

There are three levels on which we live our life. The surface level is that of feeling and action. Below that is the level of thought and conviction. But deeper still is the secret place where we are what we are. Some people live most of the time on the surface level, being propelled into certain lines of conduct by the way they feel about themselves and things and people, and relatively unconscious of the deeper roots out of which their feelings and actions arise. But the roots are there. Their life on the surface is the outcome of the convictions concerning God, the world, themselves and their fellowmen that through various influences have been formed in them on the deeper level. No man can escape thinking, and thinking to a conclusion that issues in action, on the central questions of existence. These questions are theological questions and when he thinks about them he is a theologian.

It is hard to understand how anyone who ever has to speak on behalf of the Christian faith can avoid being driven to serious theological study. It is an awesome responsibility, to undertake to speak the word of God's truth to our fellowmen, a word that has in it for them infinite possibilities of life —or of death. It is so easy for us to be betrayed by our human weakness and ignorance, more particularly by our involvement in a sinful humanity

and a sinful society, into mingling a large measure of our own falsehoods with God's truth. Who that has a sensitive conscience can fail to be plagued with the question "Was it really God's truth that I spoke?" God intends us to face that question honestly, and, when we do, bringing our message to the test of whether or not it has in it the same truth of God that is revealed in the Scriptures, we find ourselves engaged in a difficult theological investigation in which we are glad to have the help of more experienced theologians of past and present.

Are we to deduce from the fact that so few even of the ministers of our churches interest themselves in theology that they are not yet sensitive in conscience to the question of truth or falsehood in regard to their own message and principles? Perhaps they have found a way to assure themselves of their soundness without inquiring too deeply into the validity of their theology. They have found some theologian who impresses them as so thoroughly Christian that they can share his soundness by taking over their views ready-made from him, thereby rendering unnecessary any extensive studies of their own. They may not know it themselves but others can recognize in the character of their preaching, and of their witness in general, that they have not yet begun to take seriously their theological responsibility, for convictions and beliefs taken over ready-made from some other quarter have always in them the quality of the second-hand and never the ring of personal first-hand knowledge.

The neglect of theology—which is the neglect of thinking—in our modern Protestant Christianity is one of its most serious weaknesses. It is in part the consequence of an impatience with theological distinctions. It has seemed to be more generous and tolerant to assure Christians that their differences in belief are of no great importance, that the Church is large enough to take in all who in the broadest sense acknowledge a loyalty to Jesus Christ. But soon that tolerance goes one stage farther and we begin to hear that any religion is good so long as one is in earnest about it. How deluded then Jesus must have been not to recognize the adequacy of the earnest religion and moral concern of his fellow-countrymen!

Also our engrossment in the practical has contributed to the neglect of theology. Action has been the watchword of our time, missionary action, social action, militant action for the strengthening of the church's external structure. It is not over-critical to quote the typical modern churchman as saying: "Give me something Christian to do but do not ask me to think."

But today it is dawning upon thoughtful men that the character of our actions is determined by the character of our thinking, that a false theology leads to a false way of life, and that you do not touch a church's or a nation's vital heart until you get down to the levels of thinking and being. All the problems of our existence are at their base theological, and there are no solutions until on these deeper levels we know the truth which was incarnate in Jesus Christ and which alone has power to set us free.

J. D. S.

# Degree or Kind? A Christological Essay

W. NORMAN PITTENGER

THE purpose of this paper is to discuss afresh the question: Is the difference between our Lord Jesus Christ and other men (who, in Christian faith, are always to be understood as in some genuine fashion "indwelt" by God—sometimes it is thought by the "spermatic Word," sometimes it is thought by the Holy Spirit) a difference properly characterized as of degree or of kind?

I am quite aware that the immediate reaction of many readers will be that the discussion of such a question belongs to a period twenty-five or more years ago, rather than to our own day. It presumes an interest in the philosophical investigation of religious affirmations; and in our contemporary theological situation, philosophical thought is regarded by many as utterly beyond the concern of the theologian. It sounds like a revival of the problems which arose in the "age of liberal religion"; and, of course, we are (so many think) now living in a time when "liberalism," with its questions, is dead. It implies that we may discuss, in rational manner, the doctrines of the Christian Church and their relationship; and in a time when "biblical theology" has for many superseded all such endeavour, problems of this sort may seem irrelevant. That is to say, the raising of such a question may appear to run counter to neo-orthodoxy, whether in its Protestant or in its Catholic dress.

I concede that these objections may be made, but I am quite unmoved. Perhaps I can put my attitude in this way. It is my conviction, for what it is worth, that the view of theology which regards it as concerned only with "domestic housekeeping" and concerned not at all with the relation of the theological household to its neighbours, is in the long run destructive of any meaningful theology at all.

Theology, in its great days and among its great exponents, was (as Canon Raven has pointed out in an appended note to the first volume of his recently published Gifford lectures) vitally interested in the whole world and everything in it, seeing the world as the creation of God and the redemption wrought by Christ as a clue to his final purposes; hence theology was concerned with the attempt to work out, in the light both of the Christian revelation and also of our wider knowledge, the pattern of things entire. Nowadays, too often, theology is concerned (as one of my students has lately put it) "with explaining itself to itself," with talking about a specially selected series of historical events in isolation from the rest, with arranging and re-arranging biblical motifs, types, developments, and ideas, and with

finding ways of re-furbishing ancient formulae so that they will have some appearance of verisimilitude.

On the other hand, there is hope for the future. In many different quarters and by many different thinkers, this "dead-end" kind of theology is now seen for the sterile enterprise it is. Paul Tillich, whatever one may think of his specific teachings, has led the way on this side of the Atlantic; his successor at the Union Theological Seminary in New York, Daniel Day Williams, has written wisely and well in this same vein; Canon Raven's Gifford lectures have been published (to be greeted with ill-disguised sneers by those who represent the prevalent movement in theology) and are being read; some of the younger theologians in Britain and in America have ventured to publish articles—although not yet many books—in which they dare to discuss theology philosophically; and a member of the editorial board of this journal, Dr. Eugene R. Fairweather, who very likely would not agree with the line I shall take in this paper, has just lately given a series of Paddock Lectures at my own seminary in which he bravely called for philosophy in theology. From these and other signs—including my own experience in teaching and lecturing to students who have responded enthusiastically to the possibility of rational discussion of theological themes—I am emboldened to say that the question which I put in this paper is a real one, is one which can be discussed, and is one which ought to be discussed.

Let us begin by stating briefly what the Christian faith in Christ affirms as to his person. In Chalcedonian language it states that he is one Person, in whom are two natures: one divine, the eternal Word who is of the same substance as the Father, the other human, the nature which is of the same substance as Mary his Mother (and of men generally). In his Person, the two natures are united indivisibly, inseparably, unchangeably, unconfusedly. In another way of phrasing the assertion, God the eternal Word in the human life of Jesus, body, mind, and spirit, is united with the reality of human nature in such a fashion that of him who is the union we may say "He" rather than "they." Or in language made familiar by St. Athanasius, we may say that the life born of Mary was at every point and in every way the sufficient *organon* for the eternal Word in his man-ward self-expression.

Two points are at once clear. In the first place, it is the eternal Word, the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity, who is incarnate. Indeed the whole theology of the Trinity is, from one point of view, a development of the evaluation of Jesus Christ as incarnate God. To avoid the danger of ascribing deity to Jesus absolutely, the trinitarian theology was essential. Whatever is divine in Jesus Christ is all divine but it is not all *of* divinity. Any other view would lead to the Swedenborgian identification of "Jehovah" with "Jesus." The second point is that the humanity of Jesus is declared to be full and real humanity, body, mind, and spirit. Nothing that men possess—save the sin which possesses them—is absent from the life of the incarnate Lord. As every historian of doctrine knows, it was to safeguard this

major insistence of Christian faith and experience that the Church fought for centuries with various docetic tendencies which would have reduced the fullness of the human nature which by incarnation God made his own.

In the light of these two points, it seems to me evident that the Christian Church's intention has been to relate the Incarnation of God in Jesus Christ as closely as possible to that more diffused and pervasive operation of God whose agent is the eternal Word and whose expression, so far as we are concerned, is peculiarly in the men whom the Word (in Johannine phrase) "lightens." Jesus Christ is unique (*monogenes*), yet at the same time he is related to that universal movement of the Word in and to man of which the Johannine prologue speaks. One might almost say that the basic christological problem is the relationship of the unique and the universal, so far as the work of the eternal Word is concerned.

The one thing that one *cannot* say was once said in my hearing by a distinguished Jesuit divine, Francis Woodlock. He had heard someone insisting that God in Jesus and God wherever else found are all of a piece; and in indignation he said, "The Catholic theology says that there is an absolute difference in kind between God in Jesus and God in other men." I was able to reply by a quotation from St. Thomas Aquinas, commonly regarded by Roman Catholics as a reputable Catholic theologian, in which the Angelic Doctor states quite clearly that God, being "simple," is therefore simply *God* always and everywhere. Of course what Father Woodlock intended to say was that the difference between the *union* of God and man in Jesus and the union of God and man elsewhere, is (for Catholic theology generally) a difference of kind, not of degree. But even that statement could be questioned. For there have been some writers, not condemned as heretical (Cardinal Bérulle, for example), who have spoken of the Incarnation "as the manner and mode by which God ever works in his creatures" (*Oeuvres*, p. 990). Baron von Hügel, in his letters and in his christological discussion in the essay on Christianity and the Supernatural, found in *Essays and Addresses*, speaks in the same vein.

The fact is that the Catholic understanding of the nature of man, which sees him as made by creation *capax infiniti*, can hardly fail to imply at the least a close relationship between Christ and his brethren. It is true that sin has seriously damaged this "capacity"; man is not only *privatus boni* but *vulneratus in naturalibus*, to use the Thomist phrases. But Catholic Christianity, in whatever form (Anglican as well as Roman and Orthodox), has consistently refused to see man as utterly *non capax infiniti*; it has therefore been accused by some Protestant theologians of lack of realism about sin. The truth is, in my judgement, that Catholic Christianity has, rather, been truer to the biblical teaching that man is made in the Image of God than have those professedly biblical theologians who somehow seem to think that they honour God by denigrating his creation. Indeed, one might say that the really valuable element in what is nowadays called "old-fashioned liberal Protestantism" was its reaction (violent because there was so much to react

against, and because violent therefore overdone) against the appallingly low view of man which the Protestant scholastics, although not always the great continental reformers themselves, were accustomed to teach as biblical. And I think that one reason that writers such as Reinhold Niebuhr cannot profit from the careful analyses of F. R. Tennant in his treatment of the doctrine of "original sin," is that they are not really able to see that if man is what the Bible says he is, some unbreakable ontological relationship must continue as between him and God, and (in our immediate context) between the Saviour and those whom he came to save. Their use of Scripture is, to say the least, highly selective.

However all this may be, it is my contention—as one who rejoices in the name of "Catholic Modernist" or "Modernist Catholic"—that we cannot in fact talk about that which is *unique* without reference to that which is *universal.* Anything which is *absolutely* unique would, so far as I can see, be absolutely unknowable; we should have nothing with which to compare it, nothing as criterion by which to describe it. Of course we could accept it by a sheer act of faith; but the faith in that case would appear to me to be closer to credulity than to faith in the strictly proper sense of commitment to that which speaks meaningfully to our condition. In this sense, logical positivism (*not* logical analysis, which is a legitimate enterprise) would seem well married to "neo-orthodox" theology.

Some contemporary theologians, in this case Anglican, have attempted to revive the Scotist conception of *haecceitas*, usually translated "singularity," as true of each and every instance of manhood; hence as true *a fortiori* of our Lord. Two observations may be made. In the first place, the very way in which this position is phrased brings it once again into the logic of relationships (true of every man, true *a fortiori* of Christ), and leaves us still with the problem of degree or kind. Secondly, Duns Scotus' conception does not seem to me to be as markedly different from St. Thomas's individuation theory concerning each concrete manifestation of a class, as these thinkers appear to assume. I believe that "singularity," in any event, is appropriate only insofar as it is an emphasis on the quite obvious fact (which nobody in his senses has ever denied) that each instance of manhood is in fact *an* instance, with those characteristics and qualities which are properly its own, but also with such relationships and connections, such community and continuity, as make it possible to put it in the class "man."

But if this be true of manhood, and therefore of the manhood of Jesus, what of the *union* of God and man in him? We have seen, first, that God is God wherever he is and however he manifests himself: there are no "degrees" of Deity. We have seen that man is man, but with real differences, so that our Lord may rightly be said to be in actuality what all men are potentially. May the same be said of the union of God and man in him? For me, the answer is an unreserved affirmative.

Leaving out of consideration, lest this paper become altogether too long, the question of the relationship of the eternal Word—Deity in his self-

expressive "mode of being and acting" both in the divine life of God himself and also in the created world where it is specifically his "economy" so to express the "unmeasured Godhead," as St. Irenaeus put it—and the order of nature generally, let us turn to the historical realm of human life and experience. Every man, I should say, is united with God in several ways, quite apart from Jesus Christ's particular person. He is united by God as creature to Creator; he is related to God as agent for God's will to the God who wills in him, however brokenly, imperfectly, sinfully he may respond to that will; he is related to God as object of love to the Love which is God himself in his care for his human children; he is, or may be, related to God "attentively," as the traditional writers phrase it—that is, by prayer, by meditation, by contemplation; he may be united to God "mystically," in which (despite the misinterpretation of mysticism so prevalent today among the "neo-orthodox") no identification of substance or ontological status is intended but a genuine union *in charitate*: the entrance into the vision of God.

Or, to put it in another way and with the use of another mode of philosophical theology, man is "grounded" in the eternal Word, who in divers manners and in varying intensity works in and through him in realizing the perfection of manhood which is the divine intention in the creation of man. That Word, as "ground" of man, is of course not *identical* with man: man is not "really divine at bottom." The Word is the divine creative energy, if you will, which both calls man into being and holds him in being; he is the power working in man, "the light lightening" man, "the life which is the light of man"—thwarted by sin, denied by self-will, rejected but never ejected from the life of the creature. Furthermore, the Word is prevenient to man's response; in trinitarian terminology, the Word "enters" the world, the Holy Spirit "responds" through the world—and above all, this is true in and of man in his history.

Now it is my conviction that if all this be true, the only way to understand the Incarnation of God in Christ in the context of an incarnational presence and operation of the Word of God in nature, in history, in human life, is to see that what is, so to say, "diffused" elsewhere ("at sundry times and in divers portions") is "focussed" in our Lord Jesus Christ. But the difference between diffusion and focussing appears to me to be, *par excellence*, a difference of degree. There is always union between God and man, of some sort and in some way; in Jesus Christ, that union is *the* union, towards which all others point and from which they are seen (once we accept Christ as being what Christian faith declares him to be) in all their rich potentiality yet all their tragic failure.

Furthermore, *the* union of God and man in Christ is of such an intensive degree that the two are in fact made one, so that (as I have phrased it in a recent paper for the World Council's Theological Commission) "the eternal Word so appropriated and used the humanity which by providential operation was conceived and born of Mary that he possessed in that humanity,

by its free human response, an organ for self-expression which was adequate for his purpose; while the human life which was so conceived and born appropriated and expressed the eternal Word's gracious movement in and through it so that the organ was in fact available for the Word's purpose among men."

I am aware of the possible criticism that this is a christological formulation which is on the "Nestorian" side. I acknowledge this; indeed, I rejoice in it. For while it is not "condemned Nestorianism," it is certainly the kind of view and the kind of way of stating the Incarnation which is found in Theodore of Mopsuestia's commentary on the Nicene Creed (now available to us in English, in Dr. Mingana's translation published by the John Rylands Library), and which is also, I believe, the intent of Nestorius's own argument in *The Bazaar of Heracleides* where (as I think rightly) he demonstrates that his actual christology was that which Chalcedon was later to accept as orthodox.

Probably one reason that many theologians have rejected the "difference of degree" is that they think that it makes our Lord only slightly different from the rest of us. It may be pointed out, however, that a difference of degree is not only a difference of 1.2.3.4, but may be a difference between 1.2.3. and infinity. As Hastings Rashdall once remarked, differences in degree "can *amount to* difference in kind." Or, as I should prefer to phrase it, the difference in degree between our Lord's actualization of union between God and man, and our own pitiful approximations, is a difference so great that it leads us to adore him, to find in him both our Lord and Saviour (because of what the difference results in, in our experience of new life in union with him) and also our Master and Pattern (and hence one whom we can love as Brother as well as worship as Lord).

Gerard Manley Hopkins, in one of his poems, uses some daring words:

> In a flash, at a trumpet crash,
> I am all at once what Christ is, since he was what I am, and
> This Jack, joke, poor potsherd, patch, matchwood, immortal diamond,
> Is immortal diamond.

May we not say, with Douglas Richardson, that Christ our Lord and we men who are his brethren, are in one sense "of the same stuff," all of us "carbon?" But that he in whom God was manifest in human life, with a fullness and adequacy which brings us to our knees before him, is the "immortal Diamond," while we are but the charcoal?

If we can and do say this, as I for one should do, we must guard against a possible misunderstanding. It may be thought that we are guilty of portraying Jesus Christ as the mere evolution, from within humanity alone, of divine potentialities. Such a view would, of course, be inadequate to the whole spirit of Christianity, in which our Lord is always seen, not as the highest product of humanity, but as the greatest gift of God. But our safeguard here is a soundly based incarnational theology; and it is at this point that the developed trinitarian doctrine of God is of quite enormous impor-

tance. For God "above us," unexhausted in his being and hence transcendent, and God "within us," the immanent Spirit driving through the world to conform it to the divine purpose, is in this trinitarian doctrine seen in relationship to God "with us," the concomitant presence and power of Deity, operative in and upon the world and evoking the response which is the work of the Holy Spirit. Thus in Jesus Christ, seen as the focal self-expression of God the Word in human terms, in a world which is itself also the Word's self-expression in varying manner and degree, we have not an "evolution" in the sense of the unfolding of what is immanently present, but rather the "emergence," within a continuity of God-man relationships, of a new fullness which is thus a real novelty.

I have used the word "emergence" because it suggests, in contemporary process-philosophy, that which is, on the one hand, genuinely *new*, and which is also, on the other hand, intimately related to all that has gone before or that goes on round about. But here once again we run into possible objections. For, as I have heard it said, "the eternal Word in Christ comes into the world, not out of it." I think that this is true in one sense, but absurd in another. It is true in the sense that every operation of God the Word in the creation is an "entrance" into the finitude of the creaturely order. It is absurd if it is intended, as it would seem in this case to be, to suggest an almost spatial notion of the divine in relation to the created. The trouble here is in a confusion between psychologically apt (and liturgically suggestive) expressions of the experience of man as "visited" by God, who "comes down" and "breaks into the closed circle of our humanity" and thus "raises us" to himself, and theological precision in statement. But statements that are psychologically apt and liturgically suggestive are, theologically speaking, metaphorical in quality. They are not to be taken in any *literal* sense. Our difficulty so often is that what is really a psychological description of experience as we feel it is taken to be a theologically appropriate formulation. With whatever refinements we must make (and make them we must) as between metaphor, symbol, and analogy in theological discourse, we must at least never fall into the egregious error of confusing the language of devotion, of conversion, of "rescue from sin," with theologically precise definitions. St. Thomas Aquinas, to name no other, knew better than that.

So if "emergence" implies, as it does (say) for C. Lloyd-Morgan and his followers, a fresh intensification of the divine *Nisus* (by which he means, as he affirms at the end of *Emergent Evolution* and *Life Mind and Spirit*, what the Fathers meant by the *Logos*) in action in the creation, we may appropriately apply it to our Lord. He is *the* Emergence of the eternal Word in full human expression, by perfected union with the creature; of which Emergence, the lesser emergences of that Word in and through other men, each in their own small degree, are the adumbration and intimation. Thus once again we are brought back to difference in degree.

There are two final considerations which I believe should be noted. The

first is a logical one. What, in fact, is meant by difference of degree or difference of kind? It was, I think, William Temple who in a footnote to *Christus Veritas* (I do not have a copy of this important book ready to hand and cannot "verify my reference") said that when the problem was put to him in this fashion, he always wished to reduce it to the logical *absurdum*, "Is the difference which may be predicated between a difference of degree and a difference of kind, itself a difference of degree or a difference of kind?" And lest this be thought to be nothing but logic-chopping, I should refer to Robin Collingwood's admirable treatment in *Essay in Philosophical Method*, where he shows—convincingly, to my mind—that in a world in which there is organic consistency and co-inherence, there can in fact be no absolute differences in kind; save, I should add, as between the uncreate and the created, God and the world, but not as between finite realities as such or between the divine operations in them at the several levels which have appeared in the course of creation.

The last point is simply that the proof for our Lord's uniqueness is in any case not in the sort of difference between him and other men, but in the work which he does for those other men. If it be true, as Christian experience affirms, that in and through him God does unite men with himself in deep communion and fellowship, bringing them life and joy, forgiveness and peace, then we are bound to see in Jesus Christ something different from that which is true, in that sense, of other men. Yet it is also a fact—or so it seems to me—that a doctrine of the person of our Lord which would lift him altogether out of the context of the divine-human relationship as men otherwise know it and share it, would have the terrible result of making him a mere prodigy, a "bolt from the blue," not really speaking to our condition but in effect denying our condition because the human is not truly related to the reality of God in the very roots of its being. That is to say, I am convinced that there is a *religious*, as well as a theological and philosophical, interest in maintaining, as I have sought to do, that the difference is of degree and not of kind.

If what I have said in this paper is at all cogent, it carries a corollary. We have learned, during the Christian centuries, to use the focal fact of the Incarnation of God in Christ as our clue to the nature of God and the purpose which he has in his world. May we not, ought we not, use that same focal fact as our clue to the divinely-intended nature of man himself, to the potentiality which by divine creation is implanted in man, to the partial realizations of that potentiality in the great and holy ones of our race, to the divinely-purposed end for which man was created and towards which, under the guidance and in the power of God, he is meant to move? In other words, is not this part of what we ought to mean when we call our Lord the *proper* Man, the "representative Man," and say (with the New Testament writer) that we are "to grow up in all things unto him who is the head, even Christ"?

# On Proving God

R. F. ALDWINCKLE

CAN the existence of God be proved? What memories does such a question evoke of past intellectual battles and theological controversies! The question is once again coming to the forefront of the stage in modern theological and philosophical discussion. The Vatican Council still bravely declares that, "The same Holy Mother Church holds and teaches that God, the beginning and end of all things, may be known for certain by the natural light of human reason, by means of created things."[1] The Roman Church has never officially departed from this point of view. In the ranks of Protestant thinkers there is no such confident agreement as to the capacity and role of reason in such high matters. There are those whose reasons for saying "No" to this question are mainly of a philosophical order. They have been convinced that Kant has shown once for all the inability of the speculative reason to pass beyond the limits of the phenomenal world. If God can be known, it must be by some other means, such as our moral sense or religious experience. Others seize upon the ambiguity of the word "prove" and point out that men of undoubted intellectual capacity have not been convinced. This shows that whatever rational arguments may be adduced in favour of belief in God's existence, they obviously fall short of complete demonstration. Otherwise there would be no atheists. Others, such as Dean W. R. Matthews, point out that even if the traditional arguments prove all that they set out to do, our religious interest in their conclusions would be very limited indeed. The God who is reached at the end of a process of philosophical argument simply does not sustain belief in the God whom the Christian in fact worships. For the latter is the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, not the *ipsum esse subsistens* of scholastic argument.

In all fairness it should be recognized that much modern Protestant disregard of the rational proofs springs not from Kantian scepticism but from a religious motive. When Luther declared that the *analogia entis* is the invention of the devil, it is perhaps in this sense that he should be understood. He was so profoundly convinced that the only God worth knowing is the redeeming God of the Bible, manifest in Christ, that no additional metaphysical supports are needed. Since it is a fact that men have been justified by faith and reconciled to God without any philosophical knowledge of God at all, let us be content to live in the order of grace. This seems to have been the attitude of the Reformers and is still that of their modern followers. It has a long ancestry and recurs again and again in the Christian church.

Let us examine it carefully, because, if Tertullian's dictum is true that Jerusalem and Athens should have nothing to do with each other, then

1. R. Garrigou-Lagrange, *God: His Existence and Nature*, p. 8.

merely to ask the question of God's existence in terms of rational argument is a waste of time and perhaps a near approach to blasphemy. Kierkegaard evidently thought there was something indecent in talking about proof of God's existence, as there would be in discussion of another person's existence while he is in the same room with us. We may admit at once, in spite of the Thomists, that if by proof is meant the kind of demonstration that is logically coercive in the sense that no sane man who follows the nature of the argument can possibly reject it, there is no proof. If we are thinking of proof in the mathematical sense, it is equally true that such proofs of God are not to be found. It is often assumed, however, that the only alternative to proof in this sense is probability and that, since the religious man cannot worship and trust a mere probability, he can have no interest in arguments which give him such an insubstantial basis for his faith.

We must even go a step farther. If we eliminate at the start all evidence derived from divine revelation and religious experience which is man's response to the divine initiative, our rational conclusions, whatever they are, cannot contain these things. They may be smuggled in surreptitiously at the end of our reasoning, but they will not have been reached by the reasoning process alone and it is dishonest to suggest that they are. Have we not then returned to Luther's position which claims that faith alone gives us all we need, and that what the philosopher adds can be of no vital import for the religious life of the believer?

The position is not so simple. While it is true that Christian faith in God cannot be created in the believer by metaphysical arguments, it is neither possible nor desirable that the Christian apprehension of God should be isolated from every other sphere of knowledge. The Christian knowledge of God, produced by the response of faith to divine acts in history, must be seen in relation to our knowledge of the world given by science and philosophical reflection. If it is not possible to generate religious certainty about the Christian God by metaphysical argument, it may be possible to show that the Christian belief in God is not irreconcilable with the kind of world revealed to us by science and philosophy. The latter may not give us the redeeming God of biblical history, but they may give some knowledge of God as Creator and Sustainer of the universe. Faith and science may then unite in a Christian philosophy which enables the Christian believer to worship God with mind and heart, instead of leaving him with an inward tension destructive of the unity of personal life.

It is not enough, therefore, to put the question in the simple form: Are there any cogent reasons for believing that theism is a more reasonable and satisfactory explanation of the universe and man's destiny in it than any other? The exact kind of theism we are seeking to establish must be defined. If we add the adjective Christian to our theism, then it must be clear what results have been obtained from philosophy and what are given to us in faith. If it is argued that only a knowledge given in faith turns out to be reasonable, the term reason demands definition also.

Our discussion assumes that it is at least legitimate to ask: How much,

if anything, can we claim to know about God by pure philosophy? Let us, then, review the present state of theistic discussion with this in mind.

First, there are those who still maintain with undiminished conviction the traditional notion of natural theology, namely, that "from the consideration of finite being, the human mind can arrive, without appeal to religious experience or revelation, at a sure knowledge of a God whose primary character is self-existent Being."[2] Such an infinite and transcendent Being created the world, not because He had to do so, but because He willed to do so. He still would be perfect and complete without any created world at all, though having once created it He is now deeply and lovingly concerned about it. This is the *philosophia perennis*, which finds its most complete expression in Thomas Aquinas and is ably advocated today by Etienne Gilson, Jacques Maritain and other Thomists. In a modified form, the same thesis is persuasively maintained by Anglicans such as E. L. Mascall and Austin Farrer. Although it would appear that the latter denies the Thomist assumption that God's existence can be "demonstrated" *a posteriori*, i.e., by rational argument from the things that are made, the concept of God he wishes to defend is substantially that of the *philosophia perennis*. The late Dean Inge, despite his notorious antipathy to Roman Catholicism in its institutional expression, nevertheless thought highly of the philosophical theism embodied in scholasticism. Historically, the cosmological and the teleological arguments have been supposed to be convincing rational defences of this idea of God. Thomas rejected the ontological argument, namely, the view that one can pass directly from the idea of God as an infinite and perfect Being to the necessity of His existence. His followers have agreed with him against Anselm and Descartes and at this point, at least, Thomism joins hands with Kantianism.

In the opposing camp are those who insist that theism as thus conceived is not the only form of theism for which there is rational defence. Indeed, Charles Hartshorne of Chicago in a notable series of books[3] has claimed that such a theism is quite incompatible with the basic tenet of the Christian faith that God is love. To argue that God is immutable, complete and perfect in the Thomist sense, to whom nothing can be added which makes any difference, destroys the Christian confidence that God cares for His children with a love like a Father's and shares in the tragedy of their failures and sins that arise from their misuse of freedom. Whatever the perennial philosophy may say about the compatibility of the divine impassibility and Christian love, the plain fact is that they cannot be reconciled. When, therefore, the modern philosopher attacks on philosophical grounds the God of Aquinas and those who share his views, he is not destroying theism but only one possible type of theism which is unsatisfactory both religiously and philosophically.

2. E. L. Mascall, *He who is*, p. ix.
3. C. Hartshorne, *Beyond Humanism; Man's Vision of God; Philosophers Speak of God.*

Hartshorne's alternative form of theism is what he calls panentheism. This means that God is not only complete and perfect in Himself, as the *philosophia perennis* conceived Him, but that He is also complex, changeable, ever incomplete and growing in value. The relation of God to the world is not that of a product of a divine, unnecessitated act of will. The world in some sense is necessary to God, God is such that He could not be content, even with the fullness of the triune life. He had to create and is, therefore, bound up with the temporal order and the sufferings of His creatures in a much more intimate way than was logically possible on the traditional view. The Chicago philosopher rigorously repudiates the charge that this involves a finite, imperfect, limited and struggling God but agrees that it does mean the frank recognition of a temporal aspect of deity and the admission that what happens through human will in the actualities of history does add something to God in a more than metaphorical sense. The existence of children adds something to the life of parents in the realm of actuality, and this must be true of God if He is truly love. There is, therefore, a middle position between traditional theism, with its idea of the *Actus Purus*, (or of God perfect and self-sufficient without a created order), and what is commonly supposed to be the only logical alternative to the traditional view, viz. the idea of a merely limited and finite deity.

This bold attempt to harness William James, Henri Bergson and A. N. Whitehead in the defence of a theism which is both more cogent philosophically and more satisfying religiously certainly introduces an important new element into the modern discussion of theism. Nels Ferré in his *Christian Understanding of God* has evidently been deeply influenced by this kind of argument and there is much in the writings of the present Dean of St. Paul's which suggests that he would be in sympathy at several points with Professor Hartshorne's basic contention.

What, then, shall we say about the proofs of God's existence in the light of this general background? There is obviously no space in a brief article to develop and defend a thesis in detail. Suffice it to state, rather dogmatically, a few of the points which, in the writer's estimation, are beginning to emerge with some clearness from the debate.

(1) While it may be bold to claim that the reign of Kant is coming to an end, it is undoubtedly true that his theory of knowledge has come under increasing attack. The Thomist attacks on Kantianism and the criticisms of Anglicans such as A. E. Taylor deserve to be taken seriously by Protestant thinkers, even when they do not share the ecclesiastical affiliations of these men. The Thomist attack on Kant is not invalidated because it is made by men who hold a doctrine of the Church impossible to Protestants. Professor Hodges, speaking as a philosopher, has admitted that Kant never saw how his transcendental standpoint could be combined with the ontological standpoint and that an agreed correlation of the two has yet to be found.[4] If the Kantian theory of knowledge is not our starting point, then the traditional

4. H. A. Hodges, *Languages, Standpoints and Attitudes*, pp. 40–1.

proofs are not rendered invalid without further consideration. We can discuss them without begging the question beforehand by assuming an epistemological dogma of questionable validity.

(2) Though the ontological argument is not a proof in the strict sense that it can be demonstrated that a God exists who corresponds to our idea of Him as infinite perfection, it remains true that our possession of the idea of a perfect being and man's spiritual aspiration after union with such a being calls for explanation. Nevertheless, the Thomists are right in refusing to make the case for theism dependent on this famous argument.

(3) The cosmological argument, which does not necessarily depend upon the Aristotelian form of the Thomist statement of it, is still convincing to all who are prepared to admit the real existence of finite and contingent creatures and are not willing to reduce causality to mere association or juxtaposition of psychic events in the manner of Hume. Tillich stresses the fact that the cosmological argument is a failure as an argument. He would interpret it in existential terms as "involving the courage which accepts and overcomes the anxiety of categorical finitude."[5] But if the courage to overcome is not mere bravado, it must depend on belief in the actuality of a Being who is not himself the victim of categorical finitude. This must mean that the cosmological argument has metaphysical as well as existential truth. This would appear to be the thesis defended by Austin Farrer in *Finite and Infinite*. The cosmological argument is based on the assumption that one can reason from the existence of finite being to necessary or self-subsistent Being on which it depends. It is not an argument from ideas in someone's head, but from the existence of a universe of finite creatures, which is not self-explanatory or self-sustaining. This presupposes the existence of a world not dependent entirely on our perception of it. Even though Kant stressed the creative activity of the mind in construing a universe according to the categories by which the mind must inevitably think, his retention of the "thing in itself" testifies to the fact that he never entirely surrendered the realist and therefore ontological reference of knowledge. Our knowledge of the world is not a mere subjective playing with ideas. It refers to some reality not exhaustively explained in terms of the mind's own activity. As Professor Hodges pointed out at the place already referred to, Kant never succeeded in combining the transcendental and the ontological in any satisfactory synthesis, but he never denied the necessity of both. If then there is a world which we can know, what is its character and what are the creatures or substances or units which it contains? Austin Farrer has shown that we can reach solid ground in establishing finite substance only when we come to the human self conceived in terms of will, i.e. purposive activity. This is not a denial of the existence of matter, in the idealist sense, nor a defence of solipsism. Rather it is the assertion that our reasoning from finite creatures to their source or ground must use as its fundamental analogy the willing activity of the self. Dorothy Emmet in *Epiphany Philosophers* has

5. P. Tillich, *Systematic Theology*, vol. 1, p. 209.

maintained that if we use this analogy, and think of the perfect form of activity, which is God, as goodness on the analogy of our own interior scale of valuable activity, we must give some reason independent of the analogy for holding that this is the most appropriate way of thinking of it rather than on the analogy of the physical conception of "free energy." There seems to be no way out of this dilemma except to say that the first analogy is more fruitful in the sense that it can give a more satisfactory account of other finite creatures, whereas the analogy of free energy makes the existence of the willing self with its valuing activities inexplicable. Yet we are far more certain of the latter than of any notion of "free energy" such as the modern physicist may employ.[6]

(4) Though the teleological argument can no longer be defended in a simple pre-Darwinian form, based on the analogy of the celestial Watchmaker, the acceptance of some form of the evolutionary theory has not banished teleology from the process as a whole. Few can read carefully F. R. Tennant's two great volumes, *Philosophical Theology* or Dean Matthews' *Purpose of God* or Elton Trueblood's *Logic of Belief* without being convinced that the teleological argument is very much alive. There is no space left here for an adequate discussion of this famous argument. Kant admitted it to be the one which most commends itself to commonsense and the minds of ordinary thoughtful people. Dr. Farrer's apt comment on the anti-metaphysical trend of Christian theology in recent years may be quoted as summing up our contention: "If we surrender metaphysical enquiry, we shall vainly invoke supernatural revelation to make up for our metaphysical loss of nerve."[7]

(5) The present writer shares Professor Hartshorne's dislike of the doctrine of impassibility in its traditional form. It certainly creates great difficulties for the defence of biblical theism, but whether the solution is to assert a temporal aspect of deity is as yet by no means clear. I predict considerable discussion on this point in the future.

(6) Despite the logical positivists, who deny that the word *God* has any intelligible meaning, and the Barthians, who are not greatly interested in what the philosophers say, there is good reason to think that natural theology is due for a revival. While we may readily admit with the late William Temple that there is a hunger of the spirit which neither natural theology nor natural religion can satisfy, we may certainly hope that in the near future a more satisfactory account of the relation between reason and faith, philosophy and revelation will be achieved than can be discerned in the somewhat confused theological debate of the past few decades.

6. A. Farrer, *The Glass of Vision* (Bampton Lectures). Cf. Chapters IV and V for an illuminating discussion of the metaphysical use of analogy.
7. *Ibid.*, p. 78.

# John Wesley, Charles Simeon, and the Evangelical Revival

RONALD REEVE

ON the 7th February, 1838, the Masters and Seniors of Trinity College, Cambridge, published a notice requiring all undergraduates to "attend Chapel eight times at the least in every week, that is, twice on Sunday and once every other day." Failure to comply, they suggested, might lead to rustication. The undergraduates complained to the Senior Dean, who pointed out to them that chapel-going was a privilege highly valued by their elders and betters. The students, however, had not failed to notice the laxity of their professors in this matter. They formed a Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Undergraduates, and kept a close check on faculty chapel attendance. At the end of the Lent Term they published a class list in which the fellows of the college were classified according to honours standing. The Deans were disqualified from receiving the prize medal for regular attendance and good conduct since they were required to attend chapel twice daily. The Senior Tutor obtained a rather poor second; two fellows were not classed at all. The only fellow to attain first class standing was a Mr. Perry who was later to become Bishop of Melbourne.[1]

The religious state of affairs at Cambridge illustrated by this episode from the annals of the early nineteenth century represents a vast improvement on what had gone before. Eighty years earlier in 1757 the university sermon in Great St. Mary's one April Sunday morning had ben solemnly preached to the Heads of Colleges, a Mr. Rigby, the Duke of Bedford and his son. No other persons had been present! Indeed, the noble Duke was there only because he had brought his son up to Cambrige to "settle him at Trinity," and was no doubt concerned to see that the lad did the right thing on his first Sunday.[2] By contrast, however, a writer in 1834 could say, "Let the reader enter the University Church at the hour of service, and he may sometimes see six or seven hundred undergraduates in the performance of a voluntary worship, and hanging with deep attention on the accents of the preacher."[3] When we ask what had made such a reformation possible, the answer is to be found in the work and witness of two Anglican priests, John Wesley of Christ Church and Lincoln Colleges, Oxford, and Charles Simeon of King's College, Cambridge.

The elder of the two men, John Wesley, was born at Epworth in 1703, the son of a parish-priest, and had a miraculous escape from death when his father's rectory was maliciously set on fire in 1709. In the confusion, John

1. Charles Smyth, *Simeon and Church Order* (C.U.P.), 1940, p. 127.
2. *Op. cit.*, p. 131.
3. *Op. cit.*, pp. 132–133.

was not missed by his parents for some time, and was only snatched from his bedroom seconds before the burning roof collapsed. So he spoke of himself in after-life as "a brand plucked from the burning." He went up to Oxford, and was ordained deacon in 1725 on election to a fellowship at Lincoln College. After an abortive attempt at a curacy in his father's parish, he returned to his alma mater and took over the lead of the "Holy Club," or "Methodists," which his younger brother Charles had already started. In 1735 he visited Georgia as a missionary for S.P.G., an episode which must be regarded as a complete failure. He incurred the wrath of the settlers by insisting on baptising their children by total immersion; he refused to use the burial service at the funeral of a dissenter, and would not give holy communion to unconfirmed members of the Anglican Church, although there was no other ministry available. He became entangled with a lady who eventually brought an action against him, not, however, for breach of promise, but for repelling her from the communion table. Ultimately, he was forced to return to England by public opinion, apparently quite undeterred by this latter experience, and married a widow some years later with whom he was anything but happy. He records the failure of his marriage in his Journal in the words, " I did not forsake her, I did not dismiss her, I will not recall her."[4]

It was, of course, on the way home from the mission field that the dejected Wesley fell in with the Moravian Brethren, and began to think seriously about his spiritual state before God. As he confessed to his diary, "It is now two years and almost four months since I left my native country in order to teach the Georgian Indians the nature of Christianity. But what have I learned of myself meantime? Why—what I the least of all suspected:—that I who went to America to convert others was never myself converted to God."[5] But it was not until the evening of the 24th May, 1738, while listening to a reading from Martin Luther's preface to Romans at a little meeting in Aldersgate Street, London, that he received the assurance of the Spirit. "I felt my heart strangely warmed, I felt I did trust in Christ, Christ alone for salvation, and an assurance was given me that He had taken away my sins, even mine, and saved me from the law of sin and death."[6]

Charles Wesley had been the subject of a similar experience a few days before, and it is from this period that we may date what has now come to be called "the Evangelical Revival." Church historians have dealt adequately with the formal record of the growth of the embryo Wesleyan Church; at first, of course, nominally Anglican, but growing so large so quickly, that it soon found itself in opposition to the Established Church and, contrary to the wishes of its founder, eventually broke away. From these histories it is clear that John Wesley was the architect of the move-

4. John Wesley's "Journal", 23rd January, 1771.
5. *Ibid.*, 7th February, 1736 and 29th January, 1738.
6. *Ibid.*, 24th May, 1738.

ment and its organiser. His brother Charles was the theologian and the hymnologist, whose magnificent hymns might well be sung in heaven itself for their excellence. George Whitefield, without fear of contradiction, was the Chrysostom, "the golden-mouthed preacher," whose words could (and did) sway the multitudes; and Lady Huntingdon provided both the "Connexion" and the financial support which were so necessary.

The Wesleyan scheme of theology, as one would expect from this brief biography of its founder, was based on the absolute necessity of justification by faith alone. Where complete faith in Christ was exercised by a surrender of the will, it was maintained that there must inevitably follow an assurance that Christ had accepted the individual concerned. This spiritual experience was called "the new birth," and in the early days of the movement was invariably highly emotional, although of course, not therefore necessarily suspect. But while this gift of assurance was at first regarded as an indispensable necessity, it should be noted that Wesley said at the end of his life that this had been a mistake. "When, fifty years ago, my brother Charles and I, in the simplicity of our hearts, told the good people of England that unless they *knew* their sins were forgiven they were under the wrath and curse of God, I marvel they did not stone us! The Methodists, I hope, know better now. We preach assurance, as we always did, as a common privilege of the children of God; but we do not enforce it under pain of damnation, denounced on all who enjoy it not."[7]

Clearly the work of the Spirit cannot be limited to any one group, or to any one mode of operation laid down by that group. However, Wesley and his colleagues did perform a great service to the catholic church in drawing attention to the much neglected doctrine of the Spirit, and this was the specific Wesleyan contribution to theology. Dr. Wheeler Robinson has laid down the canon that the post-Reformation centuries represent "the Arian controversy" of the Holy Spirit,[8] doing for the doctrine of the Spirit what the fourth century did for the doctrine of the Son. And if that is a true statement, we can see in the period two phases which have contributed to our modern understanding of the Spirit. The first came with what Dr. G. F. Nuttall calls "the Holy Spirit in Puritan faith and experience," and is to be found in the seventeenth century writings of the Puritan divines like Baxter, Sibbes and Bunyan.[9] This phase represents the rediscovery of the Holy Spirit as the mainspring of all Christian activity, and resulted in that type of pietism which is still practised to-day in the Society of Friends.

The second phase came with this Wesleyan, or Evangelical, Revival which overspilled from the Church of England into the founding of the Methodist Church, and, at the same time, gained a following among many who remained as "evangelical clergy" within the Established Church. Here,

7. Southey's *Life of Wesley*, p. 175.
8. H. Wheeler Robinson, *The Christian Experience of the Holy Spirit* (Nisbet), 1928, p. 65.
9. G. F. Nuttall, *The Holy Spirit in Puritan Faith and Experience*, (Blackwell), 1946.

then, in the second phase, we have a new realisation of the work of the Spirit in redemption, rather than any speculative insight into the doctrine of the Person of the Holy Spirit and His relation to the Father and the Son. For the theology of revival, we can only go to the sermons and the diaries of the preachers, this being one of the significant differences between the Evangelical Revival of the eighteenth century and the Tractarian Movement of the nineteenth century. The latter has left us a plethora of theological works. The former has left us a witness to the power of consecrated lives. The evangelicals converted thousands of what have been called Nothingarians, people who were "nothing going nowhere"; the Tractarians insisted that our intellectual appreciation and liturgical expression of the deep things of God should match our spiritual participation in what He means to us in personal experience; and both views, of course, have a vital place in the Christian life of the twentieth century.

So it was that, apart from its essentially Protestant insistence on justification by faith, the only specific Wesleyan contribution to theology, was the doctrine of Perfectionism; and here we find that Wesley contradicted himself as to what he meant by it, and Whitefield disagreed with him to the point of estrangement. This subject has been dealt with fully by a great Methodist theologian, Dr. Newton Flew,[10] who reluctantly concluded that Wesley, in his attempt to define the doctrine, meant different things at different times. The proof-text, of course, is to be found in I John 3:9: "Whosoever is born of God doeth no sin, because his seed abideth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is begotten of God." Wesley referred this passage to what he called "sinless perfectionism," reasoning that, since love is the fulfilling of the law, therefore he who loves God and his neighbour fulfils the law to perfection, and need not look for any other evidence. Whitefield, who was a double-dyed Calvinist, referred it to an indefectible principle of grace in the individual, reasoning that, if the Holy Spirit indwells the believer, it is impossible for him to fall into sin. Neither view has stood the test of time, having obvious limitations, and, in particular, causing irreparable harm in the hands of those uninstructed in the finer points of theology. We may, however, detract nothing from the greatness of Wesley as the pioneer of modern evangelism in noting his failure to arrive at a satisfactory pneumatology. Indeed, it would have been strange if the man whose primary interest was the ministry of conversion should have had time to produce a classical theology of conversion. That, in fact, is still to come. The reducing of Christian experience to adequate and satisfying theological propositions takes a long time and if the work of the patristic period on the doctrine of the Son is anything to go by, it may be hoped that the theologians of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries will be able to bring to its logical conclusion, the thesis laid down by Wesley two hundred years ago.

10. R. Newton Flew, *The Idea of Perfection in Christian Theology*, (O.U.P.), 1934, ch. xix.

## II

It is commonly asserted that the English Established Church in the eighteenth century was filled with Arians, Latitudinarians and Nothingarians and none else, except a few high churchmen left over from the Laudian régime (of whom John Wesley's father was one!). The retort of Bishop Butler to John Wesley, "Sir, the pretending to extraordinary revelations and gifts of the Holy Ghost is a horrid thing, a very horrid thing!" is usually quoted at this point as indicative of the low ebb of rationalist theology. But this, of course, is only one side of the picture. There certainly were many gentleman-parsons such as the one who was asked what he thought of Wesleyanism and replied, "My dear Sir, there may be other doors into heaven than the Church of England, but I am sure that no gentleman would use them!" But there was also Grimshaw, rector of Haworth in Yorkshire (to be the home of the Brontë family a hundred years later) who would set his congregation to read the 119th psalm while he went round the village with a horsewhip rounding up the strays and driving them into church for the sermon. And once inside his church, it was said, "he was at times like a man with his feet on earth and his soul in heaven." When he commenced his ministry there were twelve communicants; when he died, twelve hundred. John Fletcher of Madeley, was converted as a minister of the Established Church, by reading Wesley's Journal, and laboured for twenty-five years in a large, poor parish in Shropshire. He had been offered a living elsewhere, but had refused it on the grounds that the income was too large and the population too small. Accordingly, he addressed himself to the rector of Madeley, who was willing to exchange his large parish for the smaller one, and so gave himself to a fervent evangelical ministry. James Hervey, who had been one of Wesley's original Holy Club of Methodists at Oxford, lived a short but fruitful ministerial life, and wrote two books, one of which, with the alarming but typical eighteenth century title, *Meditations among the Tombs*, became one of the most popular devotional classics of the age. John Berridge, who often preached for Wesley and Lady Huntingdon, sacrificed academic honours at Cambridge to go to the humble parish of Everton in Bedfordshire, and there exercised a preaching ministry which has been the envy of ministers ever since. Thousands flocked to hear him from all over England, and scenes were witnessed in his churchyard which were comparable to the effects of the preaching both of Wesley and Whitefield. Henry Venn, rector of the important Yorkshire living of Huddersfield, also exercised a remarkable ministry of conversion. But without doubt the most romantic character connected with the Evangelical Revival in the Anglican Church was John Newton. He had been an atheist in his youth, engaged in the slave-trade and plying between the African ports and the southern States. He was converted by reading the Bible during a hurricane in the south Atlantic, and eventually gave up the slave-trade and sufficiently educated himself to be able to go to university. He became

the bosom companion of William Cowper, the evangelical poet, and wrote many hymns after he was ordained and had become rector of Olney in Buckinghamshire. Among other hymns of his such as *Approach my soul the mercy-seat, Glorious things of thee are spoken*, and the little two-verse gem, *May the grace of Christ our Saviour*, we find the hymn which he wrote especially for the first service in a newly-constructed chapel which he had built:

*Great shepherd of Thy people, hear;*
*Thy presence now display;*
*As Thou hast given a place for prayer,*
*So give us hearts to pray.*

All these, and many more, were contemporaries of Wesley, working along his lines (and often in collaboration with him) but doing so within the limits of Established Church order. Some of them, of course, had gone outside the boundaries of their own parishes when they had seen people neglected, but most of them saw what they regarded as the red light, when the Methodist lay-preachers began to celebrate communion and took to themselves the work of the ordained clergy against the wishes of Wesley. It is therefore true to point out that, alongside the specifically Wesleyan revival, there was an evangelical party in the Anglican Church who agreed with Wesley in his interpretation of the doctrine of redemption, but parted company with him in the matter of church order. These were the first generation Anglican evangelicals, and suggest the truth of a wider interpretation of the history of the Evangelical Revival which would claim that it bears the true characteristics of a work of the Spirit, in that it was both spontaneous and universal. It began with Wesley and his colleagues, both inside and outside the Established Church, but the movement was bigger than all of them put together. There were hundreds of evangelists involved, whose names are not, and never will be, known. What happened, perhaps, was not so much that "John Wesley to the fight and to the rescue came," but that "a deep spiritual awakening sprang up almost simultaneously in different districts all over England." How it progressed is epitomised in the work of Wesley, but he was a part rather than the whole.

Just how much had to be done by these men in the England of the Industrial Revolution is beyond the ken of many a parish-priest today with his highly organised techniques and pastoral training. And just how much they failed to do is demonstrated by the continued existence in the nineteenth century of men like the Rev. Sydney Smith, Canon of St. Paul's Cathedral in London, renowned as a wit. He, on his part, epitomises not the nineteenth, but the eighteenth century Anglican minister who despised any form of religious enthusiasm whatever, and carried his religion rather too lightly to be of much use to God, and certainly lightly enough to be a constant source of amusement to his fellows. Some examples of Canon Smith's table-talk in the shadow of St. Paul's and selected at random, will illustrate the point:

I have, alas, only one illusion left, and that is the Archbishop of Canterbury . . .

As the French say, there are three sexes—men, women and clergymen . . .

I never read a book before reviewing it; it prejudices a man so . . .

My idea of heaven is eating *pâtés de foie gras* to the sound of trumpets . . .

What a pity it is that we have no amusements in England, but vice and religion . . .

Bishop Berkeley destroyed this world in one volume octavo; and nothing remained after his time but mind; which experienced a similar fate from the hand of Mr. Hume in 1739 . . .

What Bishops like best in their clergy is a dropping-down-deadness of manner . . .

The Evangelical Revival was born in an age when divines were sympathetic to the claims of reason and had lost the truth that there is a road to the heart which sometimes bypasses the intellect. The direct influence of a Personal Spirit was regarded as a gift limited to the apostolic age, and it was not uncommon for this to be taught from the pulpit. The first sign of a new approach to this problem of the work of the Holy Spirit in the individual was being propagated from at least one pulpit in the university of Cambridge while the young Sydney Smith was drinking tea with the ladies and amusing them with his wit.

## III

Charles Simeon was born in Reading in 1759, the fourth and youngest son of a well-to-do family. His eldest brother died young, but of his two remaining brothers, one was a member of Parliament and a baronet, while the other was an exceedingly prosperous merchant of the City of London and a director of the Bank of England. Charles went to the Royal College of Eton at an early age, and, at the age of nineteen, went up to King's College, Cambridge with a scholarship. Here he discovered that he must make his communion once a term in order to satisfy the requirements of his university, this being an age when the sacrament was still used as a test of orthodoxy and only members of the Established Church were allowed the privilege of an university education. His immediate reaction was that "Satan was as fit to attend such a service as I," and he promptly set about preparing himself to meet His Lord worthily. He read two books on how to prepare to make his communion and went through a period of self-examination and contrition. Later in the same term, however, he was required to make a second communion on Easter Day, and it was in Holy Week, 1779, that he discovered the true meaning of the Lord's sacrifice.

As I was reading Bishop Wilson on the Lord's Supper, I met with an expression to this effect: "That the Jews knew what they did when they transferred their sin to the head of their offering." The thought rushed into my mind. What! may I transfer all my guilt to another? Has God provided an offering for me, that I may lay my sins on his head? then, God willing, I will not bear them on my own soul one moment longer. Accordingly I sought to lay my sins upon the

sacred head of Jesus; and on the Wednesday began to have a hope of mercy; on the Thursday that hope increased; on the Friday and Saturday it became more strong; and on the Sunday morning (Easter Day, April 4th, 1779) I awoke early with those words upon my heart and lips, "Jesus Christ is risen to-day; Hallelujah!"[11]

So was the man who was to be the leader of the second generation of Anglican Evangelicals for the next fifty-five years converted in his own college chapel.

From 1782 onwards the history of the evangelical movement in Cambridge is, to all intents and purposes, the history of Charles Simeon. In that year he became incumbent of the parish of Holy Trinity, situated in the city market place a few steps from the University Church, and there he remained until his death in 1836, living in his fellow's rooms in college and ministering to a mixed congregation of town and gown. He never married, but concentrated the whole of his energies in two directions, ministering tirelessly to his parishioners on the one hand, and on the other, to those undergraduates who were destined for the sacred ministry. The first Theological College in the British Isles was not, of course, founded until 1816. Prior to this date, men simply went to a Bishop at the conclusion of their degree course, and were forthwith ordained and farmed out to curacies with no pastoral or theological training whatever (unless, of course, they had elected to read theology for their B.A.). Simeon, however, did his utmost to rectify this situation by holding weekly meetings in his rooms for all who would come. Here he moulded the teaching and preaching of no less than fifty-three graduating classes, expounding the Bible to them, reading the Greek Testament with them, teaching them how to take services, how to compose a sermon, how to give spiritual counsel.[12] So Lord Macaulay, the essayist, wrote to a friend: "As to Simeon, if you knew what his authority and influence were, and how they extended from Cambridge to the most remote corners of England, you would allow that his real sway over the Church was far greater than that of any Primate."[13]

As with Wesley, however, when we come to seek Simeon's theology, we must read his sermons and his biographical notes. And here, in the 2,536 sermons of the *Horae Homileticae*,[14] we find a fully-developed doctrine of the work of the Holy Spirit set in the context of the doctrine of redemption. It begins with a clear and full appreciation of the trinitarian nature of God which never allowed Simeon to slip into the prevalent sin against the Holy Ghost of thinking of Him as "It." He wrote words worth repeating when he said, "How astonishing are our obligations to each person in the Sacred Trinity! The Father is the great source and fountain of all our blessings: Christ is the procurer of them, and the medium through whom they come:

11. William Carus, *Life of Simeon* (Hatchard), 1847, p. 9.
12. Cf. Abner Wm. Brown, *Recollections of the Conversation Parties of the Rev. Chas. Simeon*, (Hamilton Adams), 1863.
13. Trevelyan, *Life of Lord Macaulay*, 1876, i. 67 note.
14. Simeon's *opus magnum* in XXI volumes, now being re-issued by Zondervan's, Grand Rapids, Mich. under the title *Expository Outlines on the Whole Bible.*

and the Holy Spirit is the agent by whom they are conveyed to us. Let us hold fellowship with each in his distinct office and character, and acknowledge with gratitude their united exertions."[15] Jews hold fellowship with the Father only; and the large majority of Christians hold fellowship with the Father and the Son; but neither has exhausted the fulness of God's revealed nature. From the beginning of creation, the Spirit and the Word have been the agents of the Father. After the Fall of man, and the consequent need for recreation, the Father sent the Son and the Spirit to deal with man's problem. Jesus Christ, as the Second Adam, was, above all else, the charismatic man; the one in whom the Spirit of God dwelt in His fulness; but He received the Spirit not only in order to perform the work of Saviour, but also in order to make Him available to the redeemed. God has provided for His people forgiveness and justification through the Son; and newness of life and sanctification through the Spirit. This is the second creation, brought about by the same agents as the first, and explains the Lord's words to Nicodemus with reference to the need for a new birth "from above."[16]

The significant fact of Simeon's thesis, however, is his unwillingness to confine the work of the Spirit to inspiration, guidance and sanctification. The Spirit is the handmaid of the Saviour in the act of redemption itself; inferior in His work of glorifying the Son and pointing men to Him; but equal as to His Person. The relationship between man and the Spirit began, not at Pentecost, but at least at the moment of creation. St. John began his gospel with the formula of Genesis 1:1 because the recreation of fallen man, made possible through the sacrifice of Christ the Word, and effected in us through the operations of the Holy Spirit, is the new creation directly parallel with the first creation. The Word and the Spirit are seen at the beginning of both of the covenants of God. In Genesis, the *ruach Jahweh* and the *dabar Jahweh* move into the void and the chaos and bring into being order, light and beauty. In the fourth gospel, the *Logos* (in the prologue) and the *Pneuma* (in chapters 14–16) move into the greater and more terrible darkness and chaos of a fallen world, and create in the souls of redeemed men, life of a new quality—eternal life, which is characterised by its order, light and beauty. So may the old covenant be reinterpreted in the light of the new. The Holy Spirit, unrecognised then as God Himself, was at work through the Law, the History of God's ancient people, and their Prophets, preparing the way for the moment of recreation. When it came, we should expect to find the Spirit present, and here it is said that when the Word became flesh, the Spirit was the conceiving power. Certainly He was very much in evidence at the Lord's baptism and temptations, and it was by Him that the Lord healed and to Him that the Lord appealed. If we may accept one interpretation of Hebrews 9:14, it was by the eternal Spirit that the Son offered Himself on the Cross without spot to the Father; and St. Paul certainly regarded the Spirit as the motive power in the Resur-

15. Sermon 2002.
16. John 3:3, 5.

rection.[17] The Ascension also falls naturally into place as the culmination of a life lived in the power of the Spirit of Holiness. Jesus Christ, God and man, victorious over death, returned to His eternal home to direct operations from the place of power, with the promise that He would now give the Spirit to His followers to be in them what He had been in the Lord Himself. So the pattern of the Lord's incarnation is the pattern for His Church as the extension of that incarnation. Its essential nature was, to quote Simeon, "the Holy Spirit co-operating with the Lord Jesus Christ in effecting the redemption of a ruined world," and as such, revealed in history the ultimate truth that there is one God in Three Persons, and that He is love. This is the basic statement of the New Testament record in which, as Simeon put it, "the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit are represented as concurring in the great work of redemption: the Father sending the Son into the world; the Son laying down his life for us; and the Holy Spirit proceeding from the Father and the Son, to apply that redemption to our souls."[18]

This, according to Simeon, is the only context in which we may begin to observe how the Spirit works in the individual believer. It will be observed in passing, however, that while he gives full weight to the particular offices of the Father, the Son and the Spirit in redemption, he also insists on the unity of the economy of redemption. The Holy Three are mutually involved at every level, thus giving no place to that departmental attitude to the Holy Trinity which says dogmatically that the Father creates, the Son redeems and the Spirit sanctifies. This is far too trite a statement. Nevertheless, when we ask how Simeon described the work of the Spirit in bringing the individual person into a living relationship with this supra-personal God, we must admit that he argued from the only experience of which he could speak with authority, namely, his own conversion. This, of course, is a weakness as well as a strength, for it issues in a rather formal attempt to canalise the work of the Spirit in one particular direction. On the other hand, it carries conviction precisely because large numbers come to Christ by way of conversion, and, as Wesley had discovered to his surprise when he came to re-read the New Testament with new eyes many years before, most of the people in its pages appear to have come the same way. For Simeon then, the work of the Spirit in the individual is a threefold process in which He may be said to operate as the Prevenient Spirit, the Spirit of Christ, and the Spirit of Holiness.

As the Prevenient Spirit, He initiates in men both the desire to come nigh to God and the will to do so. Often He makes men dissatisfied, using some apparently chance incident in their experience to set them thinking about their relationship to God. In short, wherever men and women begin to look to Jesus Christ, the Spirit is at work within them, for it is His office to glorify Christ as Saviour. Simeon's epigram summing up this aspect of the Spirit's work was, "As Christ died for all, so does the Holy Spirit strive with all."[19] This was surely the thought underlying St. Paul's comment, "No man can

17. Rom. 1:4. 18. Sermon 487. 19. Sermon 2459.

say that Jesus is Lord, but in the Holy Spirit."[20] For the Christian there can be no such thing as chance. The omniscient, ubiquitous Spirit never misses an opportunity to glorify the Lord, and it may be that it is He who creates the opportunities as well.

As the Spirit of Christ, the Comforter enables the individual to enter the kingdom of God through the labour of spiritual birth. Here the whole vast problem of the meaning of conversion is raised in an acute form. In so brief an article it is not possible to deal with it adequately, but the main points have already been demonstrated in the features of both Wesley's and Simeon's experience. First they experienced conviction of sin, failure and unworthiness: "I who went to America to convert others was never myself converted to God"; "Satan was as fit to attend such a service as I." Then they began to see that Christ alone could meet their needs and entered upon a period of hopefulness and yearning for release: "I felt my heart strangely warmed, I felt I did trust in Christ . . ."; "On Wednesday I began to have hope of mercy; on Thursday that hope increased; on the Friday and Saturday it became more strong." So finally came certainty: "An assurance was given me that He had taken away my sins"; "On Sunday morning I awoke early with those words upon my heart and lips, 'Jesus Christ is risen to-day.' " In these, and a million other Christian case-histories, the individual is aware that something has happened to him. In the words of St. Paul, "If any man is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things are passed away; behold, they are become new";[21] and those who have experienced it know it to be the work of the Son and the Spirit in recreation.

So we come to the third and last phase of the work of the Spirit in the individual, His work as the Spirit of Holiness. Both Wesley and Simeon regarded conversion as the beginning, not the end, of Christian experience and insisted that sanctification, progress in holiness, cannot precede it. Men can only begin to grow into the likeness of Christ after they have entered that relationship described by St. Paul as "being in Christ." The fruits of the Spirit are evidence of the existence of a new life; they are not, and never have been, evidence for an improvement in the old life. This simple fact explains why so many people get discouraged about their inability to conquer habitual sins. They are not looking for the work of the Spirit in the redemption of the whole man. They are looking only for partial improvement of the old man, and the Holy Spirit is never content with that, and will not give that.

## IV

From the foregoing sketch of the life and work of two great evangelists, it is abundantly evident that the Evangelical Revival represents another phase in the development of the doctrine of the Holy Spirit. Their experience and witness demand that we should re-examine our expectation

20. I Cor. 12:36.
21. II Cor. 5:17.

of the work of the Third Person of the Blessed and Undivided Trinity in twentieth century man; and especially so in the light of present trends in evangelism on a global scale. Theology has already asked, and adequately answered, the question, What does the Holy Spirit work in us when we are Christians? But there is a prior question which has not yet been satisfactorily answered, and which the pressure of contemporary movements requires that we answer truthfully: What will the Holy Spirit work in men in order that they may become Christ's?

# Christian Attitudes to Other Religions

R. H. L. SLATER

WHERE is there any likeness between the disciple of Greece and the disciple of heaven? . . . Away with all proposals for a Stoic, a Platonic or a Dialectic Christianity! After Christ Jesus, after the gospel, we want no other creed.[1] Tertullian's classic diatribe expresses an attitude which has persisted throughout Christian history and found new and equally vehement statement in our own day.

In strong contrast, there is Clement of Alexandria's appreciation of pagan wisdom. "It may be, indeed, that philosophy was given to the Greeks directly and primarily, until the Lord should call the Greeks. For philosophy was a 'schoolmaster' to bring the Greek mind to Christ, as the Law brought the Hebrews . . . a preparation, paving the way towards perfection in Christ."[2] This attitude, too, has persisted throughout Christian history and has its modern exponents, just as emphatic as those who maintain the rival opinion.

The consequent debate has been enlarged and accentuated by a wider reference which includes the beliefs of other religions, especially Hinduism, Buddhism and Islam. It is a debate which vitally concerns the younger churches of Asia, confronted by a resurgence of these great rivals of the Christian faith. In situations complicated by local patriotism and new respect for indigenous cultures and traditions, must the Christian stand alone, apparently antagonistic, obliged to say an uncompromising "No" to every non-Christian belief? Can he not, and should he not, without disloyalty to Christ, say at times a more accommodating "Yes," acknowledging and welcoming basic agreements? From Western academies where theologians debate the premises which may decide the answers to such questions there is only divided counsel. Small wonder if the leaders of the younger churches are sometimes both confused and impatient. "These questions may seem academic to some people," said one of them at a recent conference; "for us they are a matter of life and death."

Others besides the younger churches, it might be said, have cause to regard this question as urgent. It concerns the home-town evangelist here in the West as vitally as the missionary abroad. If scepticism is on the way out, its place is often taken by a relativism encouraged by the greater knowledge of other religions which is a feature of our day. On my desk as I write this article, there is a letter from the rector of a country parish asking me for a book which will enable him to convert some of his parishioners from the belief that Christianity should give place to a new, hybrid religion. It

1. Tertullian, Apol. XLIV; de praescript. haeret. VII.
2. Clement of Alexandria, Strom. 1. V. 28.

does not pass unnoticed, in the student world and elsewhere, when a scholar so publicised as Toynbee admits his vacillation between Christianity and Buddhism.

A situation of such general challenge calls for answer. Nor have answers been lacking. Stimulated by catastrophic events, by new prophets among the theologians and consequent controversies on the nature of Revelation, and, in particular perhaps, by the urgent debates of three great missionary conferences, Edinburgh (1910), Jerusalem (1928), and Tambaran (1938), discussion has steadily gained momentum since the turn of the century. It is the purpose of this present article to estimate the direction of this discussion. Who leads today, Tertullian or Clement? What new questions and insights are there, if any?

First reports certainly seem to indicate that it is Tertullian who is now master of the field, with banners flying, though the name is changed to Kraemer, with Barth and Brunner as his commissariat and some unexpected allies.

Earlier in the century it was otherwise. The Alexandrian or liberal spirit was in the ascendant. There were Christian missionaries who went so far as to suggest an 'Old Testament' for converts from Hinduism and Buddhism which would include selections from the Hindu *Bhagavadgita* and the Buddhist *Dhammapada* side by side with selections from the Psalms, the Pentateuch and the Prophets. Christianity was presented as the "fulfilment" of the true aspirations and approximate concepts of the great non-Christian traditions. At the Jerusalem missionary conference values found in other religions were favourably compared with Christian values. "The Confucian literature," it was said, "can nobly supplement the Old Testament in leading its students to Christ," while Dr. Reischauer of Japan remarked that "the more he studied non-Christian systems the more he found in them a reaching out towards the great things of the Gospel."[3] Already, however, the pendulum of opinion was moving in the opposite direction. The Tertullians present at the conference vigorously questioned the validity and possible results of this regard for similarities. "We fear," said a German professor, "that the central task of missions is in danger of being lost to view by paralleling real or imaginary spiritual values, attractive though this method is for the professor of comparative religion."[4]

One interesting reflection of these discussions is a typical attempt by Archbishop William Temple to reconcile the two divergent opinions in his comment on the Johannine Prologue. He gives a reference to the Jerusalem report, which was very largely his own work, and virtually quotes it. His comment, as will be seen, begins with a very Alexandrian statement, but ends with a significant qualification.

"All that is noble in the non-Christian systems of thought, or conduct, or worship," says Temple, "is the work of Christ upon them and within them. By the

3. "The Christian Life and Message." *Report of the Jerusalem Meeting of the I.M.C.*, Vol. I. (O.U.P., 1928), p. 81; p. 350.
4. *Ibid.*, Vol. I, p. 354.

word of God—that is to say, by Jesus Christ—Isaiah and Plato, and Zoroaster, and Buddha, and Confucius conceived and uttered such truths as they declared. There is only one divine Light; and every man in his measure is enlightened by it. . . . Yet this light is not recognized for what it is. . . . It has to shine through veils of prejudice and obsession . . . and when it blazes out more fully, men refuse it. *For these reasons it is true both that Christ is indeed the Desire of All Nations, and yet that He is always more and other than men desire until they learn of Him. To come to Him is always an act of self-surrender as well as of self-fulfilment, and must be first experienced as self-surrender.*"[5]

In the decade which followed the Jerusalem conference, the qualification expressed in these last sentences had so developed in emphasis and influence that it dominated discussion at the Tambaran meeting in 1938. One reason for this was the increasing impact of neo-orthodox theology with its insistence on the unique character of the Biblical revelation. Another reason was the change in the whole background of world events. At Jerusalem, Christians were urged not only to recognise the true insights in other religions, but to join hands with them against the rising tide of secular materialism, which was described as the common enemy of all religions. At the Tambaran assembly, such counsel, in the face of the new situation produced by the pseudo-religions of Nazi Socialism and Communism, seemed to many to be the height of unreason. A third major influence was a book written in preparation for Tambaran by Dr. Hendrik Kraemer,—a book commended by Archbishop Temple as "likely to remain for many years the classical treatment of its theme."[6]

## II

Time has fully verified the Archbishop's opinion; the influence of Dr. Kraemer's book on all subsequent treatment of this subject has been so extensive that no attempt to estimate the direction of present day thought can be made without a special consideration of Kraemer's position. This is true even if it is allowed that Kraemer does not stand alone but is representative of, and influenced by, that whole school of theological opinion which is generally called Neo-orthodox and might perhaps be more properly called neo-Protestant. Kraemer writes as one who is deeply aware that he lives in a time of transition, in a world under judgment—Divine judgment, including the religious world and Christianity within that world; a judgment made known through the searchlight of a re-discovered Biblical theology.

Essential to his whole approach is what he terms a "Biblical realism" which goes behind the terms of man-made theology, ("our so-called 'Christian' thinking") to the Biblical terms of revelation and its personal apprehension, "radically religious . . . radically theocentric."[7] This distinction between the language of faith and the language of intellectual interpretation

5. W. Temple, *Readings in St. John's Gospel*, First Series (Macmillan, 1941), Ch. I, pp. 10, 11. Italics mine.

6. H. Kraemer, *The Christian Message in a Non-Christian World* (Edinburgh House Press, 1938), Foreword, p. ix.

7. *Ibid.*, Ch. III, p. 63.

is important and has far-reaching consequences both for his approach to other religions and the elucidation of the Christian premises which determine this approach. In words which recall Barth's "strange new world of the Bible" Kraemer speaks of the realities asserted by the Bible: the reality of man confronted by "the Living, eternally-active God . . . the Lord of History"—not the God known to philosophy, or even theology, but known only to faith; a reality which offends man and challenges all his "various endeavours for self-redemption"—"all philosophy, all idealistic religion, all consistent mystical religion, all moralism;" a reality which shows the futility of these endeavours because it reveals not only God but man, man as he really is, in all "his greatness and his misery," man evading God, man "perverted by a radical self-centredness" which "permeates all his achievements."[8] This is the truth of the human situation made known through the coming of Christ and attested in the Bible, a truth concerning God and a truth concerning man.

Thus Kraemer's approach may be said to start from two polar premises, inter-related, and it is the second premise perhaps which more directly produces the distinctive features of his analysis—the premise concerning man. It is a premise which affirms man's "dialectical condition," his "fundamental and horrid disharmony." There is no denial of man's genuine religious apprehensions. Some of his religious and moral achievements can even be described as sublime. He can develop great cultures and great civilizations. His "possibilities and abilities shine in the lofty religious and ethical systems that he has produced and tried to live by."[9] Nor is there denial that these achievements may be related to God's "revelatory working."[10] But what the Christian knows in the light of Revelation is that the best that man can do as well as the worst that he can do is subject to Divine judgment because it is vitiated by sin.

Outside the Christian pale, saint and sage, no less than the "ordinary" sinner need conversion.[11] And inside the Christian pale, too, there is similar need—if we are thinking only of empirical Christianity. For here, also, the truth can be evaded, the best corrupted. The science of comparative religions, indeed, leads us to admit some traits in other religions which are even superior to those found in Christianity "in its historical manifestation."[12] Then in what better case, it may be asked, is the Christian than his Hindu or Buddhist neighbour? Kraemer answers: "There is only one great differentiation between empirical Christianity and the other faiths. Empirical Christianity has stood and stands under continuous and direct influence and judgment of the revelation of Christ and is in virtue thereof in a different position from the other religions."[13]

It is this condition, and this condition alone, which makes the Christian an evangelist. It is this awareness which provides the Christian with his criterion, enabling him, nay obliging him, to pronounce "no weak or meek

8. *Ibid.*, Ch. III, pp. 65, 67, 70, 74 ff.
9. *Ibid.*, Ch. IV, p. 113.
10. *Ibid.*, Ch. IV, p. 122.
11. *Ibid.*, Ch. IV, p. 120.
12. *Ibid.*, Ch. IV, p. 109.
13. *Ibid.*, Ch. V, p. 145.

judgment" on religious perversity, wherever it is perceived, while recognising all that is magnificently good. Thus the Christian attitude to other faiths, as to the world in general, may be described as *dialectical*—"the combination of a fierce 'yes' and at the same time a fierce 'no.' "[14]

A critic might aver that there is a good deal more of the fierce "No" than the fierce "Yes" in Kraemer's treatment of these other faiths. Examining one system after another, he says: No, there is no real preparation here for the truth revealed in Christ. The naturalistic monism of Hinduism can only be met by a "No," and even the God of the Bhakti tradition must be rejected, since he is not the God of *Holy* love. In Buddhism, as in Hinduism, man is really the measure of all things and this is the fundamental accent even in the doctrine of salvation by faith propounded by the "Japanese Luther," so again the word is "No." As to Islam, radically theocentric indeed, arising "in the shadow of Biblical realism," "taking God as God with awful seriousness," the idea of Revelation, externalized and fossilized, means the substitution of "a set of immutable divine words" for the God who acts, and this affects even Ghazali, "one of the deepest apologists of religion that have ever lived," so here, too, the word is "No"—though perhaps a more hesitant "No."[15]

One reason for this estimate is the fact that Dr. Kraemer's dialectical approach is combined with what he calls a "totalitarian" approach. In every religion there is "some fundamental essential apprehension of the totality of life."[16] In other words, the significance of any religious picture will depend on what is put in the centre. It is, therefore, futile to take two pictures, one Hindu, the other Christian, and observe that there are the same saints and vagabonds in both foregrounds if in the one all eyes are turned to a mysterious Light around a dark Cross on a dark hill, and in the other they are simply looking at their own reflection in a gigantic mirror.

But if this is the case, where do we look for any dialectical "Yes" or point of contact? A confusing problem, says Dr. Kraemer, and his own reply is not free from confusion. In one place there is the suggestion that it is all a matter of time and circumstance, a "No" today and "Yes" tomorrow; "the answer . . . depends wholly on the concrete circumstances of a given period."[17] In another place, however, there is the suggestion that the "Yes" is to be given to "a groping for God which throbs in the misdirection which governs all religious life," enabling a Christian to feel that there are kindred insights as well as kindred aspirations in such a scripture as the *Bhagavadgita*.[18] This may either mean that the dialectical "No" to each religion considered in totality is accompanied by a faint "Yes" to the half-truths lost in its context—an opinion Dr. Kraemer appears to reject—or that the "Yes" may be given to this or that individual's personal faith and experience despite his professed and misdirecting Credo.[19]

14. *Ibid.*, Ch. IV, p. 104.
15. *Ibid.*, Chs. V, VI, pp. 141 ff.
16. *Ibid.*, Ch. IV, p. 136.
17. *Ibid.*, Ch. IV, p. 103.
18. *Ibid.*, Ch. IV, p. 139; cf. pp. 130, 137.
19. *Ibid.*, Ch. IV, pp. 123, 134 ff., 140.

To all this may be added Kraemer's insistence, at first confusing, then illuminating, that all apparent similarities are really dissimilarities; "points of contact . . . can only be found by antithesis,"[20] which may mean, among other things, that what should most concern us are the *challenges* of other faiths.

On one point Kraemer is very clear and emphatic: the challenge of the great non-Christian systems of life and thought at the present day is such that there can be no question of compromise or accommodation, no traffic with syncretism or relativism, no building on the half-truths or distorted truths of rival systems, no theories of "fulfilment"—"fulfilment is not the term to characterize the relation of the revelation in Christ to the non-Christian religions,"[21]—no vain and futile comparisons, no proposals for a Stoic, a Platonic, a Hindu or a Buddhist Christianity. There can only be a return to the Biblical realism which confronts all who know it with the counter-challenge, not of religion, not even of the Christian religion, but of "the creative and redemptive will of the living, holy, righteous God of Love, the exclusive ground of nature and history, of man and the world."[22]

Dr. Kraemer's influence was immediately evident in the Tambaran reports. Statements affirming the valuable elements in non-Christian traditions were qualified by the strong affirmation that Christ is the norm and "all values must be tested before God in Christ." As an introduction to the Christian Gospel, the Old Testament had no rivals, and attempts to make this Gospel intelligible to Hindus and others must never be allowed to impair its integrity. At the same time, it was realized that the questions raised in the course of the Tambaran discussions pointed the need for further consideration and "united study."[23] Many have thought since that this need has still to be met. When the World Council of Churches met at Evanston, steps were taken which led to a further consultation at Davos, Switzerland, in the summer of the following year. While this consultation did not result in any significant pronouncements, it at least served to point the urgency of the situation and it perhaps indicated the possibility of some basic agreements.

## III

In the meantime, however, there have been a number of individual state ments which show the continued impact of Kraemer's doctrine and related theological discussions. Prominent among these is Professor Farmer's "theological interpretation" of religious types, the subject of his Gifford lectures.[24] Dr. Farmer makes only two explicit references to Kraemer's book, but there are many passages and conclusions which recall the earlier work. In both cases, the starting point is essentially the same: the Christian experience of

20. *Ibid.*, Ch. IV, pp. 136, 139.
21. *Ibid.*, Ch. IV, p. 123.
22. *Ibid.*, Ch. II, p. 83.
23. "The World Mission of the Church": *Findings and Recommendations of the Meeting of the I.M.C.*, Tambaran, 1938 (I.M.C.), V, pp. 51, 52.
24. H. H. Farmer, *Revelation and Religion* (Nisbet, 1954).

Divine Revelation centred in Christ. In both cases, the notion of a purely detached, objective study is rejected; Farmer describes it as an *ignis fatuus*.[25] For the Christian, it is his experience of God revealed in Christ which should determine his estimate of other religions. In both cases, consideration of the effects of sin qualifies anticipation of what is to be found in other religions, though Farmer's expectation is the larger: we should expect to find, he says, that *all* the elements of true religion tend to be present, obscure, maybe,—"faint, fleeting, germinal or perverted,"—but nevertheless there, since God is seeking man everywhere.[26] Farmer's affinity with Kraemer is further evident in his distinction between natural religion and natural theology. There are, indeed, significant differences. Where Kraemer turns to Biblical realism for his premises, for example, Farmer turns to the implications of Christian worship. But the attitude of both to other religions is very much the same.

Even among those whose approach would be regarded as more liberal, some basic agreements with Kraemer's position may be observed. Dr. E. C. Dewick, for instance, who is much more disposed to welcome fellow-travellers in other traditions, affirms that "in Christ we find the highest and fullest truth about God and man—a *central* truth that must determine our judgments on all the major issues of religions, and a *distinctive* truth that is not to be found with equal clearness elsewhere."[27]

Before we conclude, however, that Tertullian is indeed master of the field today, two observations are pertinent. The first is the fact that a distinction can and should be drawn between Kraemer's dialectical attitude and Tertullian's straight "No." Thus we have at least three, not two, attitudes to other religions, all of them claiming to be Christian. Some would make a further analysis and name five attitudes.[28]

Secondly, it may be said that in this article we have only surveyed a narrow field. While there is good reason to observe the theological debates associated with the three great missionary conferences of our day, there are other statements which influence a wider public opinion. Not all of these statements are directly addressed to the issue of the relation between Christianity and its rivals, but they are none the less relevant. Among these we may name Canon Raven's Gifford lectures. While he is more specifically concerned with the reconciliation of Science and Religion, Canon Raven encourages a standpoint which, if accepted, strongly supports a liberal attitude to non-Christian traditions. As he himself explicitly affirms: "to trace, as Clement of Alexandria . . . loved to do, the 'many coloured wisdom' of God in His works, . . . to find points of contact with Christian doctrine and experience in the writings of the sages of India and China, of Persia and Arabia, this is not to diminish the unique significance of the Christ but to

25. *Ibid.*, Ch. III, p. 43. 26. *Ibid.*, Ch. IV, p. 86.
27. E. C. Dewick, *The Christian Attitude to Other Religions* (C.U.P., 1953), V, p. 137.
28. Cf., D. T. Niles, *An Evangelizing Church* (World Student Christian Federation), IV, p. 5.

magnify His glory and confirm His claim."[29] Of another theologian, Paul Tillich, who today is exercising an increasing influence on Christian thought, it may be said that the more his doctrine of correlation is accepted—and understood—the stronger will be the "Yes" to other religions on the part of those who adopt the dialectical attitude.

But perhaps the greatest influence of all in this liberal direction is not that of a theologian, but that of the historian, Arnold Toynbee. Toynbee's more recent pronouncements are directly related to this issue and they are certainly challenging. Earlier conclusions from his monumental survey of world history were relayed with approval from many Christian pulpits. All that he said about the persistence of the Church and its role in human history encouraged a new respect for the Christian faith and revived confidence in its future progress. Toynbee's more recent volumes, however, reveal the fact that his own respect is not confined to the Christian faith. It includes all the higher religions; they recite, he says, the same "heavenly music," they refract the same Divine light. He regards the claim that Christianity is an exclusive or definitive revelation of spiritual truth as blasphemous;[30] it results from regression to an Old Testament pattern, and the substitution of "the incongruous Israelitish concept of 'the jealous God' Yahweh" for the Christian concept of the God of Love.[31] Christian charity demands a more liberal attitude, and it is so liberal that Toynbee can hope for a day when there will be "a reconciliation, *on Christian initiative*, between hitherto exclusive-minded religions,"[32] a day which will be an eclectic's paradise, when each will seek where he will and believe what he likes, in the light of his greater knowledge of other traditions than his own. Does Toynbee speak as a Christian? He admits frankly that his approach is not in Christian terms, as generally and previously understood. But it is clear that he himself believes it to be much more Christian than some of the opinions he describes; he considers that his attitude is justified by Christian premises, properly understood. It is also clear that his interpretation of these premises has been stimulated by what he has found in other religions including the spirit of tolerance which he calls "the characteristic virtue" of Mahayana Buddhism and Hinduism.[33]

Toynbee writes in a day when more and more books on other religions are being published at popular prices and many are influenced thereby to a similar conclusion. Another reason for this conclusion is the growing concern for world peace. To a great many people it seems axiomatic that Religion should be on the side of peace and intolerable that a conflict of religions should menace this peace.

With such a spirit abroad, and exponents so influential as Raven and Toynbee, it can scarcely be said that Tertullian is entirely master of the field or the Alexandrines vanquished and silent.

29. Charles E. Raven, *Experience and Interpretation* (C.U.P., 1953), I, p. 19.
30. Arnold J. Toynbee, *A Study of History*, Vol. VII (O.U.P., 1954), Part VII, pp. 428 ff., 444.
31. *Ibid.*, p. 439. 32. *Ibid.*, p. 441. Italics mine. 33. *Ibid.*, p. 440.

## IV

Tertullian, then, still speaks, but so does Clement, and the home-town evangelists faced by the challenge of relativism no less than the urgent churches of Asia concerned with the missionary situation, may perhaps conclude that they have long to wait before they can hope for less divided counsel. It is true that attention may be called to certain surface agreements, as when it is remarked that all Christians emphasize the supremacy of Christ. On examination, however, such agreements prove little more than verbal, and they are often accompanied by inferences or denials which maintain the cleavage of opinion.

It is more illuminating and encouraging to look beneath the surface of our modern discussions, ignoring for the moment the discrepant conclusions and regarding instead the ground surveyed in the process of reaching these conclusions. It may then appear that there has been a significant change, which affects different schools of thought, in the estimate of what a previous generation termed "Christian evidences" or, more broadly, "religious evidences." In particular we may observe the very general recognition of what we may term *depth religion*. By this term is meant the whole realm of reference which is indicated when a distinction is made between the language of faith and the language of theological or philosophical explanation; between the connotation of such terms as 'theocentric' and 'theological'; between religions considered as systems of belief and religions considered and studied as total systems of life and faith most variously expressed. Both the Biblical realists and their liberal opponents make this same recognition, though in different ways.

Nothing makes the liberal advocate more uneasy than the kind of appeal to Biblical realism which appears to desert the discipline of reason for a cloudy region of confused paradox, magnifying the *skandalon* of faith in a way which seems to override all legitimate investigation and criticism. But a more searching analysis of this position may lead to the conclusion that this "strange new world of the Bible" to which attention is directed is not so different from that larger world of religious faith and practice which the liberal himself acknowledges when he allows his approach to the subject to be influenced by modern developments in the sciences of comparative religion, psychology and sociology. He may be the more disposed to make this analysis when he considers that the Biblical reference has led at least some of its exponents towards a more sympathetic appreciation of non-Christian traditions. While still hesitant about "points of contact" between rival systems of belief or interpretation, they are prepared to consider the possibility of points of contact in the more personal faith of this or that individual; between faith, so to speak, within Faith. In allowing this, they do more than acknowledge that human need and human aspiration are much the same everywhere. They are saying that the God denied or misrepresented on the surface plane of intellectual interpretation may yet be known in the depths.

The science of Comparative Religion today points in a similar direction, calling attention to the many-sided cultural expressions of religious faith. In attempting, for example, to account for the fact that Theravada Buddhism has been a dynamic faith for centuries and is today a resurgent faith, we must look beyond intellectual denials of God and the soul. We cannot, indeed, disregard these denials but we must see them in a whole context of religious aspiration and practice which includes the quest for Nibbama and the respect for Dhamma (universal order). We must even have regard for the significance of Buddhist architecture—those lovely 'pagodas' set on the hills with golden spires pointing skywards. In doing this we are passing, as in the appeal to Biblical realism, beyond the language of intellectual interpretation to the poetic language of faith, to depth religion.

Joined with this recognition may be the further recognition that religion everywhere is sustained by story, truth 'embodied in a tale.' "The Christian Gospel," it has been said, "implies many abstract or general truths, but it is not itself a series of such truths; it is a *mythos*, a story that God sent His Son . . . the unchangeable kernel of the Christian faith is not doctrine but story."[34] Further analysis may reveal that this is true of all depth religion. May it not be said,—though doubtless with important qualification—that similarly the religion of the Buddhist is the story of the Buddha, the religion of Islam is the story of The Prophet, and, that for some Hindus at least, their religion is the story of Ram or Krisna?

Such considerations may well lead to the conclusion that the Biblical realists and their critics are not so far apart as might appear.

One thing at least seems clear as we study the direction of modern discussion, including the recent discussions at Davos: it is the fact that all concerned with the question of the Christian apologetic, whether they are interested in the problems of the home-town evangelist or the missionary abroad, whether they are liberal or conservative in their outlook, are being obliged to consider more straightly the question: What does the Christian mean exactly when he says that Christ is *the Truth*? It is apparent that Christians in general mean much more than the affirmation that the teaching of Christ includes statements which are more illuminating than those of any other religious teacher. But how much more? And what of the significance of the fact that this affirmation is joined with the further statements that Christ is also *The Way* and *The Life*? Our full answer will involve more than any consideration of how the Christian Gospel can best be *communicated*. The prior question is the question: How is this Gospel known and *received*? Time may prove that the further analysis of what has here been termed depth religion may enable an answer that is both more intelligent to ourselves and convincing to others.

34. N. Micklem, *What is the Faith?* (Hodder and Stoughton, 1936), III, 71.

# The Theological Implications of Pupil-Centered Christian Education

GEORGE M. TUTTLE

CHRISTIAN theology bears an intimate relation to ecclesiastical practice at every level, whether in the pulpit, class-room or church court. Each influences and reflects the other. It follows that if study and writing are necessary to the development of theology it is also true that the demands of preaching, teaching and even church administration may be the points of departure for new theological insights and are usually their final proving ground. To discuss theology adequately then is to have an ear for sermons, liturgies and lessons; and by the same token, the preacher and Christian educator are obliged to be aware of the theological foundations of their work.

Christian education programs provide an excellent barometer of theological developments. Indeed, their barometric readings are particularly clear, partly because the curricula in Christian education have a semi-permanent character and crystallize the thinking of a period. They take so much time, energy and money to create that any change will prompt a searching debate. Theological weakness is often first felt in the field of Christian education; and yet it is precisely here that the desired changes are last achieved.

It is commonplace to say that from the mid-nineteenth century until sometime between the two World Wars of our century the dominant theological motif of Western Protestantism was what is generally called liberalism. Labels should be used with care, for they may easily misrepresent both persons and positions. Suffice it here to say that the so-called liberal mood (however stated in essence) colored every phase of modern life and thought —political, economic, social and religious. The germinal factor behind the whole movement seems to have been a great upsurge of new life in which *a fresh look at man* yielded a new belief in man, his powers and possibilities. The expositors of the new faith included men like Mill, Darwin, Huxley and Spencer. The story is well known.

In theology the new mood came as a refreshing and invigorating breeze. The new atmosphere was first evident in Biblical studies; but soon every aspect of theology came in for re-interpretation. The final fruits were felt in preaching and religious education.

The pressures of time and the proverbial pendulum have contrived to change the theological climate again. On all sides liberalism is under review, and in some quarters is either quietly forsaken or violently attacked. Social structures are being altered. Economic policies are being revised. Political

methods are changing. So also there is a "new theology". Of this the Christian educator must take serious account. He must ask what may be the gains and losses in liberal forms of Christian education and at the same time weigh the opportunities and dangers of the "new theology" in relation to Christian education. In the present paper an attempt of this sort will be made at one point only: the place of the pupil in Christian nurture.

It is generally agreed that the man who phrased the initial insights of the modern religious education movement was Horace Bushnell whose "Christian Nurture" was contemporaneous with the writings of both Mill and Darwin. In his own way, Bushnell's starting point was man. One hundred years later a powerful exponent of liberal religious education, George Albert Coe, writing in the International Journal of Religious Education, claimed that Bushnell "brought to the problems of Christian nurture fresh insight into human nature, the experience of children, the parental relationship, the nature of personality. For the first time in Christian history a true view of religious growth was achieved. . . ."[1] Dr. Coe pointed out however, that Bushnell's more modern successors and admirers departed considerably from his doctrine of man. Bushnell did not deny the fact of human sinfulness but merely modified the doctrines of original sin and total corruption. His real interest was to re-establish the idea of child nurture which to him was implied in the covenant relationship set forth in the Bible—the child being considered not in isolation but always in the setting of the family and the church.

Bushnell was a deeply Christian person who planted seeds some of whose final fruit would have been distasteful to him. His twentieth century descendants in religious education proceeded on these tenets: that human nature is fundamentally "neutral" if not good; that evil and sin reflect failure to come to terms with the physical and social environment; that the object of Christian nurture is to cultivate native powers, "bring out the good" and thus develop character; that this is to be achieved through concrete social settings and in worship experiences. The process which leads to these goals moves by stages which demand that "age-groups" be recognized and "graded materials" prepared.

In all this the primary concern is for the pupil, his needs, interests, capacities and individuality. The pupil is placed in the central and definitive position.

Now we are to ask what elements of truth and practical value tend to be over-looked in this pupil-centered Christian education. There is no need for us to deny its highly commendable features. Indeed, it would be unwise and ungrateful on our part to use the tools of modern religious education and deny their premises carte blanche.

The subject may be developed under three headings: (1) Message and Situation, (2) Freedom and Authority, (3) Revelation and Discovery.

1. "Religious Education is in Peril," *International Journal of Religious Education*, January, 1939.

These are chosen for convenience and suggestiveness, rather than with any thought of exact definition of the terms.

### (1) Message and Situation

The first couplet, "message and situation," raises questions about the character of our teaching materials in Christian education. Religious educators have long been familiar with the contrast between "situation-centered" and "content-centered" lesson material. Put in its simplest form the prevailing view has been somewhat as follows: Begin with the situation in which the pupil finds himself. Who is he? What are his physical and social surroundings? What are his needs, interests and problems? What is our point of contact with him? How can we help him to know and serve God? Then and only then is it asked how some point or other of Christian faith has a bearing on the situation. And often enough, it has been felt that a Bible passage has to be taken out of its context or stretched somewhat to be made relevant.

Traditional views have never been entirely lost. There have always been some who have held that Christian education ought to start with the Bible. "People should know the Bible," they say, as though the Bible had some special value on its own. Or one of them may comment more thoughtfully, "The Sunday School teacher should discover the interests of pupils and raise real problems, but the trouble is that he often spends so much time doing this that he never gets to the Bible." Yet another insists doggedly: "Give them the Bible truth. Some day they'll thank you for it."

Observe the contrast between these two groups of Christian educationists. One insists on understanding the pupil's situation and only then will turn to the Bible and the Christian faith for possible guidance in that situation. The other focusses attention on the Bible and assumes there must be some application of its message to the pupil's situation.

The debate between these two proves sterile because both share too artificial a distinction between message and situation. The terms "message" and "situation" ought not to be used as though "message" were purely a Biblical matter and "situation" non-Biblical and concerned with the world apart from that faith. Actually, the Bible sets forth not only message but situation as well.

The Biblical doctrine of man stands for the fact that man cannot know himself as man, except he be aware of his essential relation to God. Only through the revelation of God (in Christ and as recorded in the Bible) does man have a true conception of who he is and of what his situation is in terms of origin, condition and destiny. His condition is two-dimensional, as are the analogies we use for describing that condition. We may take the notion of "lostness" as an example. To be lost may mean that a man does not know where he is; or it may mean that he does not even know where he is going. In the Christian view it is the first work of revelation to show man where he is, as when the Prodigal comes to himself and sees his condition

in comparison with his birthright. The second work of revelation shows man what God really has in store, as when the Prodigal on his return is surprised by the true character of his Father and the new life that awaits him. What man needs to know is his actual situation as an alienated son and his proper situation (though unrealized) as a reconciled son. Thus in the Bible, both situation and message are held together intimately. This is why the Bible must have priority at every level of Christian education. This does not imply that it is easy to bring children and youth into effective contact with Biblical material, nor that it is unimportant to probe the point of pupil interest. The claim is simply that "pupil-centered" Christian education which imagines itself able to understand the pupil's situation apart from the Biblical revelation is simply not equipped to communicate Christian faith. In point of fact, a Biblically oriented curriculum could be "situation-centered" in a far more radical sense than much material which now claims to start with the pupil where he is. There is a tremendous challenge confronting curriculum writers at this point. Those who have produced the new materials of the Presbyterian Church U.S.A. have been aware of the challenge. How far they have succeeded remains for study. Other communions in both the United States and Canada are in the midst of reshaping curricula. But the real solution cannot be expected to appear or to be achieved first at the curriculum level. It is more likely to be found by indirection, through a new climate of evangelism and theology in the Church at large and through the class-room attitudes of the teacher who in his own life has felt the situation-revealing power of God in Christ.

### (2) Freedom and Authority

Pupil-centered secular education emphasizes the freedom of the pupil in the teaching situation—a principle rightly shared by Christian education. Freedom provides the basis for that personal encounter so necessary to communication and to the development of personality. This emphasis stands as one of the great achievements of liberal education—a rebuke to doctrinaire and authoritarian attitudes which try to produce faith without freedom and obedience without love.

At the same time, concern for pupil-freedom opened the way for two unfortunate consequences. First, the fear of "indoctrination" led educators in general to avoid clear statements of conviction lest they be too easily accepted. Yet all education must proceed on principles of some sort, some point of view, whether openly acknowledged or not. This fear of forcing the pupil therefore leaves the learner open to indoctrination of a subtler sort, whereby he comes to accept hidden assumptions in place of open claims. Christian educators have been increasingly aware of this problem; but they are not alone, for secular teachers are likewise beginning to re-examine the meaning of pupil-freedom.

From the Christian standpoint it is no solution to abandon Christian indoctrination only to have the pupil subjected to unobtrusive forms of secular

indoctrination. It becomes our task to search for ways of presenting Christian doctrine which will at once exalt God and fulfil the human personality.

A second troublesome element in the idea of pupil-freedom has been the conviction that teachers should maintain an attitude of detachment in regard both to the subject of study and to the pupil's response—as though in fundamentals a number of alternatives were of equal value, or as though in matters of decision it were of little consequence which way a pupil should choose to go. Undoubtedly there are areas of learning where value judgements and personal decisions are not involved; but they are limited in number. The teacher who tries to avoid judgements and decisions can hardly escape some sense of vocational failure, and the student soon suspects that he is being cheated.

Practical solutions to these problems in secular education will be incalculably difficult to discover. Oddly enough, the Church finds itself in a freer and happier position, since Christianity was never meant to be disinterested in regard to life's issues or the personal decisions about them. The Christian educator must forswear authoritarian attitudes in teaching, but this is no warrant for proceeding in an atmosphere of tolerance amounting to noncommital looseness. To do so is to forsake the purpose of Christian faith itself and leave the salvation of persons to progress or to chance.

What then lies before us? Not a reactionary revival of authoritarianism, but rather a recovery of that teaching-with-authority which earns respect if not acceptance. We are not to reassert coercive methods, but to release again the sense of urgency so characteristic of New Testament faith. Let there be no return to doctrinaire intolerance. Rather let us encourage unabashed commitment, tempered always by humility. It is possible to teach with the conviction of a declared faith and yet retain the atmosphere and the actuality of pupil-freedom so necessary to personal choice and growth.

### (3) Revelation and Discovery

In pupil-centered Christian education as we have known it there is an underlying assumption about the means by which the learner arrives at knowledge of the truth or, in Christian terms, enters into religious experience and comes to know God. The assumption is that through concrete experience in the world and through worship experience, a person *discovers* who God is, comes to know His will and learns to do that will. God is somehow there to be found and served—and the teacher's task is to lead the learner in his search, to help him recognize God's present activity and yield himself to the fellowship and way of God. The pupil (aided by the teacher) is the active agent of discovery.

All this is true as it stands but it is incomplete. The danger lies only in leaving it incomplete, for it leaves out something fundamental to the Biblical conception of God as one who is not only actively present in the world, revealing Himself and calling men into fellowship with Him, but is also the agent whereby men are enabled to acknowledge Him.

The characteristic Biblical view is that God not only speaks and acts in relation to men, but by His Spirit enables them to hear and respond. He opens the eyes and unstops the ears. Thus, it was declared to Peter when he recognized Jesus as the Christ; "flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father who is in heaven" (Matt. 16:17). The Church of the New Testament knew that "no man can say, Jesus is Lord, but in the Holy Spirit" (II Cor. 12:3). In many different ways succeeding generations have set forth the fundamental doctrine that the Spirit is the organ of Christian knowledge, and a contemporary theologian offers Christian educators a blunt reminder of this truth by entitling a chapter in his book, "God As Educator."[2]

Beyond even the conception of God as the agent of Christian knowledge, Christian educators concerned with creating the conditions whereby personality development and character education take place need to remember that God is also the agent of growth. St. Paul's well-known phrase about God giving the increase is only one of countless Christian testimonies to the fact that growth in the Church and in the individual is the gift of God.

A soundly conceived Christian education will therefore found itself on a view of Revelation which recognizes the learning process as a divinely initiated response. And none of this denies that the learner's response is truly his own. He has a first-hand faith. God's work is as it were "before and after", enabling response and yielding the fruit of response. At the center is the pupil's decision which, both by God's purpose and by the necessities of the pupil's nature, he must somehow make for himself. Indeed, a divinely initiated response possesses a truly human and personal character precisely because the pupil thereby enters into free and loving relation with God who is the ground of all personal existence.

We have thus considered pupil-centered Christian education in the light of three sub-questions. Certain applications to curricula have been suggested, but a full application of the views set forth would involve other aspects of Christian education as well. For example, all that has been said has a direct bearing on the recruiting and training of Church School teachers. To achieve the class-room approach that is best suited to Christian nurture requires methods that are in keeping with a distinctively Christian understanding of communication. The Christian teacher points not primarily to a body of knowledge nor to himself, nor to the pupil as such, but to God who is Himself the "subject" beyond both teacher and pupil, yet including them both within His grasp. The Christian teacher cannot claim to possess the truth. He can only be possessed by the Source of all truth. He does not say: "I've got it. You take it." He says: "This has got me. You try it." In other words, one might call it the method of witness-teaching. And finally, the Christian teacher knows that God achieves what He wills with His own.

2. Nels Ferre, *Christian Faith and Higher Education* (Harper & Bros., N.Y., 1954).

# Judgment and Salvation
# An Exposition of John 12 : 31-32

GEORGE B. CAIRD

THERE are three ways in which Christians have attempted to relate the concept of judgment to God's purpose of salvation. There are those who, starting from the doctrine of election, have asserted that God means to save some and not others, and that the identity of the saved depends entirely on the free, unconditioned choice or predestination of God. All have sinned and come under God's judgment, all have deserved condemnation. But God in his unfathomable mercy has decreed that some shall escape the fate they have earned. There are those who, emphasizing man's freedom, have declared that God means to save as many as will respond to his offer of salvation and that men are judged and their destinies determined by the response which they make to God's offer. And there are those who have said that God intends to save all men and that he is able to carry out his intentions. Whatever judgment may involve, it does not involve a distinction between eternal bliss and eternal penalty.

Each of these three views, taken separately, can be defended on the ground that it enshrines a genuine insight into the nature and ways of God. But each is also open to devastating criticism. The first view preserves the vital tenet of sound Christianity that salvation is entirely the gift of God and in no sense man's achievement; but it raises a serious moral problem concerning the character of God, since if God is able to save and declines to do so it is difficult to regard him as utter goodness. The second view compels us to take seriously our moral choices, but in the last resort makes salvation to depend on man and not on God. The third view does justice to the belief that God is both loving and almighty, but apparently at the cost of ignoring sin and presuming on God's grace.

The New Testament avoids these criticisms by not taking the three views separately. There is ample Scriptural evidence in favour of all three. In particular there are sayings in the Fourth Gospel which could be quoted in support of each of them. There are passages to delight the heart of a Calvinist. "No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him" (6:44). "He who is of God hears the words of God; the reason why you do not hear them is that you are not of God" (8:47). "You do not believe because you do not belong to my sheep. My sheep hear my voice . . . and no one shall snatch them out of my hand" (10:26–28). "You did not choose me, but I chose you" (15:16). There are many more passages in which response to the Gospel determines man's destiny. "He who believes in him is not condemned; he who does not believe is condemned already,

because he has not believed in the name of the only Son of God" (3:18). "This is the work of God that you believe in him whom he has sent" (6:28). "He who rejects me and does not receive my sayings has a judge; the word that I have spoken will be his judge on the last day" (12:48). But there are also passages in which Jesus is set forth as the Saviour of all. "Behold the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!" (1:29). "God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world might be saved through him" (3:17). "We know that this is indeed the Saviour of the world" (4:42).

Is John an inconsistent thinker, trying to get the best of three incompatible points of view? Does he abandon hope of understanding in a triple paradox? Or do election, saving faith, and universal salvation all represent different aspects of the one truth of God's purpose as John saw it?

By the canons of logic the three views seem to be mutually exclusive. But there is a fair measure of agreement among theologians today that the first two views, the view which emphasizes divine grace and the view which emphasizes human responsibility, in spite of their apparent contradiction, can and must be held together in tension. But what of the third view, the universalism which since the time of Origen has been almost universally condemned as heresy? Between this and the other two there would seem to be irreconcilable conflict. Either there is a judgment which sends some to heaven and some to hell, or God will save all and bring all to heaven.

The fourth evangelist, however, is not content to leave the matter so, but insists that this contradiction too shall be transcended. "Now is the judgment of this world, now shall the prince of this world be cast out; and I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all men to myself" (12:31–32). That is to say, in the Cross world judgment becomes identical with universal salvation. Let us be quite clear about the magnitude of John's assertion. It would be simple to say and simple even to believe that in the cross judgment and salvation coincide in such a way that he who will not have Christ for his Saviour must have him for his Judge, that Christ crucified saves those who believe and judges those who do not. But John is making a much more staggering assertion, that in the cross all men alike confront the salvation that judges and the judgment that saves.

If this collocation of ideas cuts across our habitual cast of thought, perhaps the reason is that we have brought to the Fourth Gospel preconceived notions drawn from other sources instead of allowing the Gospel to speak for itself. One of the distinctive characteristics of this Gospel is that it takes one familiar theological term after another and transforms its meaning in the light of the revelation of God in Christ. Many of these terms—Son of God, word, life, truth, way, light, glory, etc.—are commonly known as Christological terms, the implication being that we have only to trace the source and history of John's vocabulary to throw a flood of light on the mystery of Christ's person. John's actual intention is precisely the opposite of this, for to him the known quantity is Christ from whom men must learn

the nature of life, of truth, of God himself. "I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life. . . . He that has seen me has seen the Father" (14:6, 9).

This revaluation of words is particularly clear in the case of the word *glory*. Jesus is accused by the Jews of arrogating to himself a glory to which he has no claim (5:41–44; 7:14–18). He replies that his accusers are judging him by themselves. The only glory which they understand or desire is the worldly authority which wins the recognition and approbation of men. He is devoid of any such ambition. The only glory he seeks is that of filial obedience to the Father who sent him. Humanly speaking, it is through this utter obedience to God's redemptive purpose that Jesus is able to enter into perfect unity with the Father, and this unity constitutes his true glory. All through his life Jesus displays this glory, "glory as of the only Son from the Father," and it leads him in the end to the cross. So completely are the ideas of glory and humble obedience fused in John's mind that he frequently describes the crucifixion as the glorifying of Christ. Elsewhere in the New Testament the suffering of the cross is represented as the path which Christ must tread in order to enter the glory of the Resurrection and Ascension (e.g. Lk. 24:26). But here in the Fourth Gospel the cross itself is the glory. John can conceive no glory more ultimate than the glory of redemptive love.

With this example before us we approach John's vocabulary with a new caution, suspecting that other old bottles have similarly been stretched to bursting point by being filled with new wine. Can it be that judgment is another word which John has filled with new meaning?

Let us then, setting aside preconceived theories, retrace our steps and ask what John has to tell us about the purpose of God and the part which judgment has to play in it. This is, after all, the main theme of the Gospel which tells us how the Logos—the eternal purpose of God—entered the world in human form. One of the first things that John tells us about this purpose is that the world was not able to grasp it until it was revealed by the Only-begotten Son. But here at the outset we must be on our guard against two possible misinterpretations of John's Gospel. It would be a mistake to think that, because in the Prologue John speaks of the Son revealing the Father, he regards the Incarnation simply as the unveiling of a divine secret. The Incarnation means not only the disclosure but the accomplishment of God's purpose. Jesus comes to utter the words of God but also to do his works. But it would also be wrong to suppose that the Incarnation was to John just the means whereby God's purpose is revealed and achieved. Christ is himself the incarnate purpose of God. In him we see revealed and achieved God's purpose to take manhood up into unity with himself. In the Gospel this theme is developed in three stages. First we see the man Jesus living in unity with God. Then in the cross Jesus identifies himself with all mankind, so as to bring them into the same unity with God. And finally Jesus predicts that this bringing of the world to God will be worked out in the mission of the church.

The first part of the Gospel is largely concerned to demonstrate that the

man Jesus is one with the Father, and to evoke from men the belief that he is the emissary of God's salvation. He manifests his glory and his disciples believe in him (2:11). His healing miracles show that "as the Father has life in himself so he has given to the Son to have life in himself" (5:26). The works which he does reveal "that the Father is in me and I am in the Father" (10:39). "Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father in me?" (14:10). "The word which you hear is not mine but the Father's who sent me" (14:24). "I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love" (15:10). "All that the Father has is mine" (16:15). "I and the Father are one" (10:30).

These are but a handful of passages taken at random from the many in which John seeks to show that throughout his life Jesus lives in the bosom of the Father. But the divine purpose is not exhausted by the taking up of one man into unity with the Godhead. It is God's will that he should prepare a place for others, that where he is there they may be also (14:3). But between other men and Jesus there is a great gulf. They are sinners; he is without sin. John has to face not only the fact of sin which disqualifies men for the union with God to which they are called but also the tragic fact that the coming of Jesus produced the opposite result to that which God intended. "For God sent the Son into the world, not to condemn the world, but that the world might be saved through him. He who believes in him is not condemned; he who does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only Son of God. And this is the judgment, that the light has come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil" (3:17–19). There were some indeed who came to the light and believed in Jesus at first; but the many deserted him (6:66), and the few who remained had a faith that was not yet faith. "Do you now believe? The hour is coming, indeed it has come, when you will be scattered, every man to his own home, and will leave me alone; yet I am not alone, for the Father is with me" (16:32). Thus the first stage of God's unfolding purpose leaves Jesus alone with the Father who sent him.

The second stage of God's plan of redemption is the overcoming of this solitariness of Christ, this judgment of separation from those he wills to save. If they cannot be joined to him where he is, in the bosom of the Father, he can be joined to them where they are, under the judgment of God and in the death which is the wages of sin. "Unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit" (12:24). In some forms of eastern theology it is said that the Son of God, in becoming man, embraced all mankind, so that when he returned to the Father he carried with him not merely his own individual manhood but humanity, indissolubly united with him by a common participation in the body of flesh. John may have had some such idea in mind when he said that the Word became flesh, but in his Gospel it is more particularly in the Cross that Jesus is united with mankind. He identifies himself with them in their sin and accepts for himself their condemnation and death.

"Now is the judgment." The whole life of Jesus had been a judgment, but that judgment reached its climax in the Cross before which the whole world stood condemned. If the world had been left alone to face its condemnation, the judgment of the world would have been the triumph of Satan, the prince of this world. As Tempter he would have succeeded to the uttermost; as the Great Accuser he would have won his case; as Destroyer he would have been free to claim his own. But because Jesus identified himself with the accused, the Cross became the defeat of Satan and the point where all men, released from Satan's power, were drawn into unity with Jesus, and therefore into unity with the Father.

When the Johannine Christ says "I will draw all men to myself," he is speaking of the cross, an event which to him was future but which to us is past. In recording this saying, therefore, John is not claiming that Christ *will* save everybody but that he *has* saved everybody. He *is* the Saviour of the world, and his last word from the cross—"It is finished"—indicates the completion and the finality of his task. Henceforth neither death nor Satan can separate men from Christ; though they descend into hell he is there.

The world has been saved; but John has made it abundantly clear that salvation is a personal relationship, which on its human side means belief in Jesus and through him knowledge of the God who loves and saves. He has no doubt that the cross, which has effectively drawn all men into unity with Christ, has also a continuing power to lead all men into a saving knowledge of God and to transform into faith even the sin which caused them to repudiate the Gospel. "When you have lifted up the Son of man, then you will know that I am he, and that I do nothing on my own authority but speak thus as the Father taught me" (8:28). The process whereby the Cross evokes a saving faith constitutes the third and final stage in God's plan of redemption and comes into operation through the dual witness of the disciples and the Holy Spirit.

In his consecration prayer Jesus sets out in detail the threefold missionary programme which is to follow as the result of his death and exaltation. First he prays for the inner circle of his disciples, those who have known him and believed in him, that they may be drawn into the same unity which he has had with the Father. Then he prays for the church that is to be, the wider circle of those who, not having seen, are to believe through the witness of the disciples. Finally he prays that the unity of the church with himself and with the Father may be so manifest "that the world may know that thou hast sent me and hast loved them even as thou hast loved me" (17:23)—and this knowledge he has already declared to be eternal life.

Alongside the witness of the disciples John places the concurrent witness of the Holy Spirit. It is the function of the disciples to testify to that which they have seen and heard. It is the function of the Holy Spirit to bring home to the consciences of men the significance of the life, death, and exaltation of Jesus. "When he comes, he will convince the world of sin and of righteousness and of judgment; of sin, because they do not believe in me;

of righteousness, because I go to the Father, and you will see me no more; of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged (16:8–10). In other words, the Spirit will confront all men with the Cross, will convince them that in it their sin is condemned and the righteousness of Jesus vindicated, and will bring them to that judgment in which Jesus casts out Satan by bearing the world's sin that the world may share his righteousness.

John does not pretend that the task of the disciples will be an easy one. The world has hated their master and it will hate them also (15:18–20). But Christ has overcome the world by a love which was prepared to accept the world's judgment, and the disciples are summoned to abide in this same redemptive love (15:10). As he by his death has borne much fruit, so they too must bear much fruit (15:8). As on the Cross he glorified the Father, so Peter by his death will glorify God (21:19). C. F. D. Moule has recently drawn our attention to the aspect of judgment in the two Gospel sacraments.[1] As Christ at his Baptism identified himself with sinners and accepted for himself the judgment on sin which he was to endure on the cross, so for the Christian baptism is an initiation into the death of Christ, a once-for-all acceptance of God's judgment on his sin; and the Lord's Supper is the regular renewal of this communion in the death of Christ. John seems to require that we should carry this argument one stage further. For he who abides in Christ's love, the love which led him to the cross, must accept not merely God's judgment on his own individual sin, but God's judgment also on the corporate sin of the world. The Christian cannot be content with the individualism of Ezekiel's watchman—"Thou hast delivered thy soul"; has not Christ warned us that he who would save his soul shall lose it? The proper models for the Christian are rather Moses praying to be blotted out of the book of life if Israel could not be forgiven (Exod. 32:32), Paul wishing to be cut off from Christ for the sake of his brethren, his kinsmen according to the flesh (Rom. 9:3), and Judah, foreshadowing the Gospel with his words to Joseph, "How can I go back to my father if the lad is not with me?" (Gen. 44:34). These prayers and the prayer of Christ himself for the world's salvation find a modern echo in the hymn of G. K. Chesterton:

> Tie in a living tether
> The prince and priest and thrall!
> Bind all our lives together,
> Smite us and and save us all![2]

John's doctrine does not solve all our problems. We are left asking, for example, how far the present state of the world justifies us in still claiming that Christ is the Saviour of the world and the Holy Spirit the convincer of the world's conscience.[3] But John does enable us to avoid the criticisms which have always been levelled against universalism. The universalist has

1. "The Judgment theme in the Sacraments" in *The Background of the New Testament and its Eschatology*, ed. W. D. Davies and D. Daub, pp. 464–481.
2. From *O God of earth and altar.*
3. See N. Micklem, *Ultimate Questions*, pp. 112–136.

been accused of treating sin too lightly, of taking arrogantly for granted that which is but an incomprehensible divine possibility, of failing to give to man's moral choices an eternal significance. Taught by John we can reply to these charges. Can one who takes the cross seriously be said to think lightly of sin? Is one who has entered into the fellowship of Christ's suffering to be called arrogant if he enters also into the confidence of Christ's triumph? And if the consequences of our choices are seen in the cross, are they not with the cross taken up into the eternal order?

For John the eschatological events of the Last Day are so completely present in the person of Jesus that he has little to say about any final crisis. He never discusses whether or not all men will in the end be saved. But he does say that God intends the salvation of all, that God's work of universal salvation has been accomplished once-for-all by Christ on Calvary, that Christians ought to abide in his love and not to be content with anything less than love's total victory, that the final judgment will not be different in character from the judgment of the cross by which the prince of this world has been cast out and all men drawn, in fact if not yet in faith, into unity with the Crucified.

# Book Reviews

*The Grandeur and Misery of Man.* By David E. Roberts. New York. Oxford University Press, 1955. Pp. 186. $3.00.

Here is a collection of twenty sermons by the late David E. Roberts who, until his untimely death a year ago, at the age of 44, was Dean of Students, as well as Professor of the Philosophy of Religion at Union Theological Seminary, New York. The book has been compiled and published posthumously.

Several features differentiate this collection from most volumes of published sermons. Most important of all, they are not a series of disjointed utterances gathered under some catchy title. *The Grandeur and Misery of Man*, though it designates a particular sermon, constitutes a single theme running from cover to cover. Roberts has one gospel—*the* Gospel, and all his sub-themes come under its purview, whether he be dealing with suffering, evil, anxiety, loneliness, or even the problem of growing old gracefully. On none of life's issues does Roberts offer manicured moralisms, "pious incantations," "intellectual puzzles," or personal opinions. As Paul Tillich writes in the Introduction: "These sermons lead from the insight into man's predicament to the question of God, and from the question of God to the divine answer which can be accepted as well as rejected by man."

Strongly Pauline, the sermons depict man in his misery, trapped at the bottom of a well, his legs broken, incapable of building a ladder of good resolutions. "Only if Someone from above will come down to him in the midst of that darkness and help him upward to the light, has he any hope of salvation" (p. 42). And God has come down from above in Jesus Christ. Salvation, whether we define it as emancipation from sin or as growth in the Christian life, whether as clarity of understanding or as adjustment to suffering, always comes to man as a *gift* from *Beyond*. Roberts is Pauline, but not lopsidedly so. Recognizing man's misery, he respects man's freedom and appeals, as Jesus appealed, to man's inherent grandeur. Believing in the infinite possibilities of the human heart, he starts with man, "no matter how much such a proposal may horrify some theologians" (p. 61). Let man come into the presence of God in Christ and he will discover how to let the best that is in him come out into the light. "For in Christ we are made aware of the misery of man when separated from God, and the grandeur of man when restored to God" (p. 151).

From first to last the author wrestles with great Biblical themes. Some of his sermons, like *Spiritual Rebirth* and *Christian Certainty*, suffer from obviously having been delivered to a congregation of the theologically elite, and may be classed as scholarly dissertations rather than as "sermons" in a popular sense. They serve a strong diet, forbidding rapid digestion, but

they prove rewarding as thought-primers, and they challenge the superficiality of much modern preaching. Others are monumental examples of the homiletic art. *The Christmas Story* (p. 13 ff.) based on the familiar "no room at the inn," is a powerful, original Christmas sermon; *Bringing and Receiving* (p. 109 ff.) the greatest Communion meditation that this reviewer has ever read; and *A Christian Sense of Direction* (p. 168 ff.) preaching at its best. Roberts never wastes time on a dull, academic exposition of his text; he proceeds forthwith to its practical application, deriving even from the oldest and most threadbare truth some fresh and exciting insight. Who else, for example, has discerned in the familiar story of the ten lepers those fundamental principles which Christianity offers as a basis for national life? (p. 86 ff.) The volume includes a number of "sermonettes," models of such to the preacher, demonstrating how effectively a profound thought may be compressed in comparatively few words. Roberts employs illustrations sparingly, but such as he does use are modern and relevant. He rarely quotes from other writers; his own inexhaustible fund of original thought makes this unnecessary.

All these sermons are the product of an incisive, discerning mind. With penetrating realism they go directly to the root of every issue. "Now if you are interested in contradictions, I suggest you ponder this one. Man is so much at the mercy of temporary ignorance, mass social forces, and his own endocrine glands that he is primarily the *victim* of evil rather than the *doer* of it. And yet man—this *same* man—is thought to be capable of so directing his resources that eventually he will construct a just and stable civilization, if only he can learn how to trust himself instead of relying on God" (pp. 145–146). *Christian Freedom* (p. 38 ff.) deals positively and constructively with the essential genius of Protestantism, and is an indictment of the hysterical nature of much anti-Catholic drum-beating. On all his themes Roberts speaks in plain, unvarnished language. "Some people reject Christianity because they think it requires pretending to be sure where one is not sure . . . All I can say is that we as ministers and laymen have done a rotten job. Otherwise such people would realize that honesty, humility, and a large dose of skepticism toward neat theories do not exclude a person from faith. On the contrary, they are prerequisites for reaching faith" (p. 67). David Roberts knew his audience. The extensive counselling of theological students gave him an intimate knowledge of the human heart, its grandeur and its misery. The reader himself stands judged by many of these sermons; in spots they make uncomfortable reading. "Therefore we need to ask ourselves most earnestly whether our lives—not our words—preach this aspect of the Gospel. How much of our planning, our working, our hoping, merely reflects the frenzied pressure and externalism which we criticize so freely in our society?" (pp. 73–74). This volume might well merit inclusion among the devotional manuals used by any preacher.

Each sermon closes with a beautiful petitionary prayer. "Help us, we beseech Thee, to obey Thy will in all that lies within our power, and teach

us to leave to Thy providence and mercy all that lies beyond our power" (p. 57). The final sermon *What Lies Ahead* (p. 177 ff.) ending with the petition, "Almighty God, teach us so to live that each day's task may be a preparation for Eternity," seems like the utterance of a man fully prepared to step from time into Eternity. "No one of us is left to himself in life or in death. Each man must stand fast for himself; but wherever he does so, others live through him" (p. 186). David Roberts will, indeed, live through many others, through the students who knew him at Union Seminary, and through all who are privileged to learn from him in the pages of this book.

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*Unity and Variety in Muslim Civilization.* Edited by Gustave E. von Grunebaum. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press (Univ. of Toronto Press), 1955. Pp. xii, 385. $6.00.

Islam is the youngest of the three great monotheistic religions of the world. When the Prophet recited the words which he had heard read by the angel Gabriel from "the mother of the book" in heaven he was building on a foundation of centuries of Jewish and Christian influence not only in the Hejaz but throughout most of the Arabian peninsula. Muhammad believed that Jews and Christians were also "people of the book," his own mission being simply to bring the words of Allah to the Arabs in their own language. The resultant Qur'an shows what a debt Islam owes in its inception to its earlier sister religions. This field has been frequently explored and the results are well known to students of Islam in the Western world.

Immediately after the death of the Prophet in A.D. 632, however, the Muslim community began its swift and terrible conquering of the Eastern world, an expansion which within two decades translated a small band of fanatic followers of Muhammad in the Hejaz into an empire extending from Alexandria to Ctesiphon, a military wonder which has rightfully placed the names of Khalid ibn al-Walid and 'Amr ibn al 'As alongside those of Alexander, Hannibal and Napolean. But the Arabs of the Hejaz were neither by training or by birth able to impress their simple tribal forms upon the administration of so large and diverse an empire. Furthermore as Islam solidified and extended under the Umayyads and the Abbasids it became apparent that social and cultural backgrounds in different parts of the empire had been quite diverse. These made such an impact on the Islam of the area that one might well speak of regional Islamic cultures. On the other hand, the new religion remained the single binding force which even today renders the concept of a single Islamic culture a valid one in spite of serious local differences.

But even in Islam as a religion itself there is much diversity. Islam was early in its history divided into Sunnite ("traditional") and Shiite ("par-

tisan") Islam. Shiism in turn is divided into numerous sects of its own, whereas Sunni Islam is divided into four legal rites (*fiqh*). In modern Islam such puritan traditionalists as the Wahhabis of Saudi Arabia stand side by side along with liberal reformists of India, Maghribi Berbers and Sufi dervishes under the common banner of Islam.

The problem of sorting out the diverse influences at work, that is to say, of discovering how the Muslim civilization was related to the local cultures which it officially displaced is extraordinarily complex. Furthermore, the materials for study are so vast that no single Arabist could possibly deal with this subject for the whole of the Muslim civilization by himself. In the light of these considerations Professor von Grunebaum of the Oriental Institute at the University of Chicago organized a conference of renowned Arabists to meet in conclave in Belgium (in September, 1953) around the theme entitling the book under review. The book is the aggregate of the papers presented to the Conference together with summaries of the discussions which followed each paper.

One usually approaches symposia and collections of papers for review with some dread. For sixteen scholars each to contribute a paper without duplication and still present new and interesting light on various aspects of a central theme is an almost impossible task. Collections of conference papers are usually most disappointing. But this book is a remarkable exception. The galaxy of Arabists who contribute to this volume would ensure excellent scholarship to be sure. Such men as Caskel, Drewes, Gabrieli, Le Tourneau, Lewis, Schacht and Spuler are all represented. What was surprising was that only the chairman and Ettinghausen represented the North American continent. Surely men like Jeffery and Rosenthal, and now Gibb who recently went to Harvard, could have made a real contribution.

The book is divided into four parts. The first part consists of three papers on Islam as Religion and as Civilization. Von Grunebaum stated the problem of the conference in an excellent paper on "Unity in Diversity." Such thoughtful work can be expected from the author of *Medieval Islam: A Study in Cultural Orientation* (Chicago, 1946). The other two papers by Meier and Brunschvig respectively were disappointing. Both dealt with methodology, but neither succeeded in making clear to me just what it was that they meant to say. This may partly have been due to their translators. Neither is a good translation; in fact, both read like the work of people to whom English was not native.

The second and third parts are outstanding contributions. Part Two, entitled Modes of Expression of the Cultural Tradition, contains four papers, each by an outstanding scholar in the area dealt with. Schecht naturally writes on Law; Gabrieli, on Literature; Ettinghausen, on Art, and Cahen, on the Body Politic.

Part Three deals with regional evolutions, that is, with the cultural interactions of Islam with local cultures in Iran, Spain, North Africa, Tropical Africa, Indonesia and Turkey. Ethiopia was to have been treated by Cerulli

but unfortunately he was unable at the last moment to take part. Each region is again treated by a specialist. For example, Le Tourneau of Algiers deals with North Africa, and Drewes of Leiden, with Indonesia.

A final section is entitled The Challenge; it is a single study by Caskel on the impact of the West on the Muslim civilization of today.

It would of course be ridiculous for anyone to attempt to summarize the contents of this remarkable volume. An opening chapter by Duchesne-Guillemin, the Secretary of the Conference, does this much better than I could do it. I should, however, like to conclude with a word of caution. This book should not be read lightly; everyone, Islamic scholar and layman alike, will find a large amount of well-presented information on the Muslim civilization of the past and present in this volume. I could wish that everyone interested in the place of Christianity over against the non-Christian world—in this case the Muslim—would thoughtfully ponder the contents of this work.

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*Biblical Religion and the Search for Ultimate Reality.* By PAUL TILLICH. Chicago, Ill.: The University of Chicaga Press (Univ. of Toronto Press), 1955. Pp. 85. $2.25.

THIS little book, based on a series of lectures, affords a revealing glimpse of the way in which a great modern theologian conducts his enquiries. It also gives us, *in parvo*, the essence of Tillich's own position. For both these reasons, this essay is required reading for all who are interested in the intellectual problems connected with the Christian faith.

There are several schools of contemporary theology, emanating from Kierkegaard, and more immediately from Karl Barth, which tend to disparage the whole philosophical endeavour. As a matter of fact, from the very beginning of Christianity, a certain type of Christian has been tempted to divorce faith and reason, revelation and natural theology, and to insist that man's reason is so tainted with pretentious human pride that its products are not only erroneous but sinful.

Paul Tillich is strongly, and in my opinion rightly, opposed to this tendency. His view that it is necessary to work out a systematic correlation between the questions of philosophy and the answers of the Christian faith, is well-known. In this book, he squarely and honestly faces the obvious difficulties of this position. The difficulties are increased by the kind of philosophy that Tillich himself espouses. He calls this philosophy "ontology," since it is preoccupied with the problem of "being-itself." In this way of thinking, "God" is being-itself or "the principle and power of being." But

in the Bible, God is presented as *a* being, and a personal being; he is the living God who speaks and acts. The question must be asked, Is there any relation between the "God" of ontology and the God of the Bible? Moreover, ontology thinks of being-itself as the ground of everything that is, while the Bible speaks of God as the creator of the universe. Again, the Bible assumes a personal relationship between God and man, involving the authentic freedom, responsiveness and moral obligation of man. But how can there be freedom and reciprocity between being-itself and certain particular beings, and how can ontology have any interest in ethical decisions?

Tillich, thus, describes the apparent opposition between the Bible and ontology in the strongest possible terms. He then sets out to try to overcome it. Each reader will have to decide for himself how successful the author is in this attempt. For my part, I am left with the impression that ontology overcomes the Biblical position and that, in the last analysis, Tillich sides with Hegel in the view that Christian theology puts into symbolic and imaginative language what philosophy explains in the clear and unambiguous terms of rational thought; theology becomes a kind of popular and inferior version of philosophical truth. Tillich's "God" is Aristotle's Pure Form, Spinoza's Absolute, and Hegel's Idea-in-itself. Here I agree with Pascal, against Tillich, that the God of the philosophers is *not* the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

In conclusion, however, it should be pointed out that Tillich's ontology is not, as he tries to make out, synonymous with philosophy as such. It is, to be sure, one of the great philosophical traditions, but it is not the only one. Theology cannot be divorced from philosophy, but it need not be married to one particular brand of philosophy.

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*The Religious Orders in England. II: The End of the Middle Ages.* By Dom David Knowles. Cambridge University Press (Macmillan Company of Canada), 1955. Pp. xii, 407. $9.00.

To write the history of the Religious Orders in England at the close of the Middle Ages is a formidable task. The historian must face a vast number of documents whose critical control is uncertain. The researches of Thompson, Graham, Little, Postan and Pantin, to name but a few, for all their value in restricted areas, do not provide a general guide through the labyrinth. Further discouragement may be found in the misfortunes of previous writers. Whether blinded by a zeal to redress ancient wrong and slander (Gasquet), or by a too hasty use of evidence for polemical purposes (Coulton), the track has often been lost, and the life of the Religious Orders in late medieval England left obscured by a lack of charity, balance in judg-

ment and candour. Yet quite possibly, in this volume of Father Knowles, the problem has met its match in a vast synthesis of original research and second-hand material, where erudition is revealed with restraint and modesty, and where the presentation of an extremely complex subject has been illuminated with a graceful and lucid style.

It is the scope of Knowles' book that first commands our attention. The monasteries are described from within in complete detail. At every turn, previous judgments are corrected. No one will ever again attribute all the ills of late medieval monasticism to the Black Death. If previous researchers have seen visitation records in a false perspective, attributing to the many the derelictions of the few, Knowles presents more balanced judgments, without minimizing either the significance or the seriousness of the material contained in those reports. From the monastery we follow the monk into the outside world, the University and the town. This is the world of the friar, whose life and activity receive their full due, set within the turbulent currents of English theological and philosophical thought of the day: the rivalry of monk and mendicant, the stinging barbs directed against both by the satirical poets, the poisonous hatred of the heretical Wycliffe and his followers. From time to time, we find biographical sketches of distinguished religious, superb character studies which compress material sufficient for a dozen monographs into a few pages. Knowles is equally at home with the Orders whether within the cloister or without, in cell, market place, university hall, pulpit, or glebe field. For the final achievement of his book is its integration. The various strands of the life of the Orders are described *seriatim* and yet revealed to be interrelated one with another and with the pattern of English life in the later Middle Ages. One might complain that the Bibliography is, as Knowles admits, incomplete. The scanty reference to the works of Coulton is striking, all the more when one considers the effect which that irascible controversialist of immense erudition has had on our understanding of the Religious Orders in the declining medieval world.

What we have then is a picture of the autumnal season, the silver age of the English religious. Yet as Knowles clearly shows, all was not merely in a dignified and gentle decay. As the publisher tells us, we do not find here an "unhistorical picture of the monasteries hastening towards Niagara." The fourteenth and fifteenth centuries record significant advances for the Religious Orders. In some ways, the monasteries did remarkably well during the season of plagues, adjusting with no small success to the new economic order wherein rents replaced services. The Orders produced great men: Alan of Walsingham, Simon Langham, Thomas de la Mare, proud prelate and ascetic, Uthred of Boldon, exponent of the dangerous *clara visio*, and the sturdy monk-bishop, Brunton of Rochester. The fifteenth century itself is not without new developments in types of monastic life: Carthusian, Bridgettine and Carmelite. The strength of the Orders is indicated by their participation in the controversies of the day, especially those relating to poverty and Dominion and Grace. We find that Netter the

Carthusian provided the theological hammers for the extirpation of the Lollards. Uthred of Boldon attempted to moderate the theological imbalance of an age when speculation was pushed to extremes, for its own sake and not for the elucidation of the Faith, and when piety was contaminated by the alien, the peculiar and the idiosyncratic.

Yet for all their balance and restraint, these pages will provide any careful reader with ample material for the pathology of the Religious Orders in England. The perspective of history endows certain incidents described by Knowles with that nostalgia we reserve for the missed opportunity, for the path not taken, e.g., the offer of Henry V to assist the Benedictines in setting their own house in order, the failure of the monks to respond, and the early death of the King. The ascendancy of laymen over the destinies of the Religious Orders, the use of wealthy patrons by the Orders for protection and support, the entrance of the layman into the office of the monastic steward, these command the attention of those students for whom the rise of the "lay spirit" is one of the most significant phenomena of the pre-Reformation period.

Yet more significant is the plain fact that all in all the stream of English life, once so profoundly influenced by the Religious Orders, was now passing them by, leaving the Orders higher and higher on that beach of indifference which is but once removed from scorn and hostility. The greater abbots no longer played important roles in the counsels of the mighty. Fear of heresy reduced the friar's sermon all too often to a stereotyped orthodoxy. Netter the Carthusian refuted the Lollards but what else? The call of the cloister was not so compelling. Uthred of Bolton felt compelled to justify the religious life. Was he not writing as much as for those within religion as for those without? Despite their vast holdings in land, the monasteries no longer occupied an integral part in the economic stability of the country. Within the Orders themselves, discipline and the reform of abuses were pitched in a lower key. In the face of repeated prohibitions, the wage system penetrated ever deeper into the monastic community, sapping the spiritual ideal of poverty. The growth of private apartments destroyed the common life; the monastic was fast becoming a kind of resident canon. The desire to leave the cloister, to travel, for whatever pretext, placed increasing strains on the vow of chastity. Here we see that the monk was embarked upon a journey from the monastery, the last stage of which would prove to be compulsory. In so many places we encounter incompetent or venal superiors, indifferent bishops, despairing visitors.

Where can the blame be placed? Knowles does not shrink from directing an accusing nod at the Papacy of the later Middle Ages, indicating how the vicissitudes of the Papacy had a destructive effect on monastic life at the time. He notes the venality of the Curia, its zeal to "provide," its tendency to regard an abbey as a bundle of economic assets, the havoc wreaked by the Popes of the Schism who in their desire to obtain support offered relaxation of discipline to the highest bidders. Knowles points out too that

blame must be laid at the door of the episcopate, now too often a reward for the service of the crown rather than a recognition of gifts, priestly and prophetic. However, the experience of the author, himself a religious, is here perhaps our best guide. With candour Knowles remarks that notorious sanctity is unknown to the religious of this period. As he observes, in things spiritual it is the men that count in the last analysis. Behind all the symptoms of decay, there are the religious themselves. Mediocrity is a word which Knowles does not use, but mediocrity is plain, in itself a harbinger of that day when Zion herself would be visited in wrath by her children and when those who blew neither hot nor cold would be submitted to the exactions of the secular and the greedy.

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